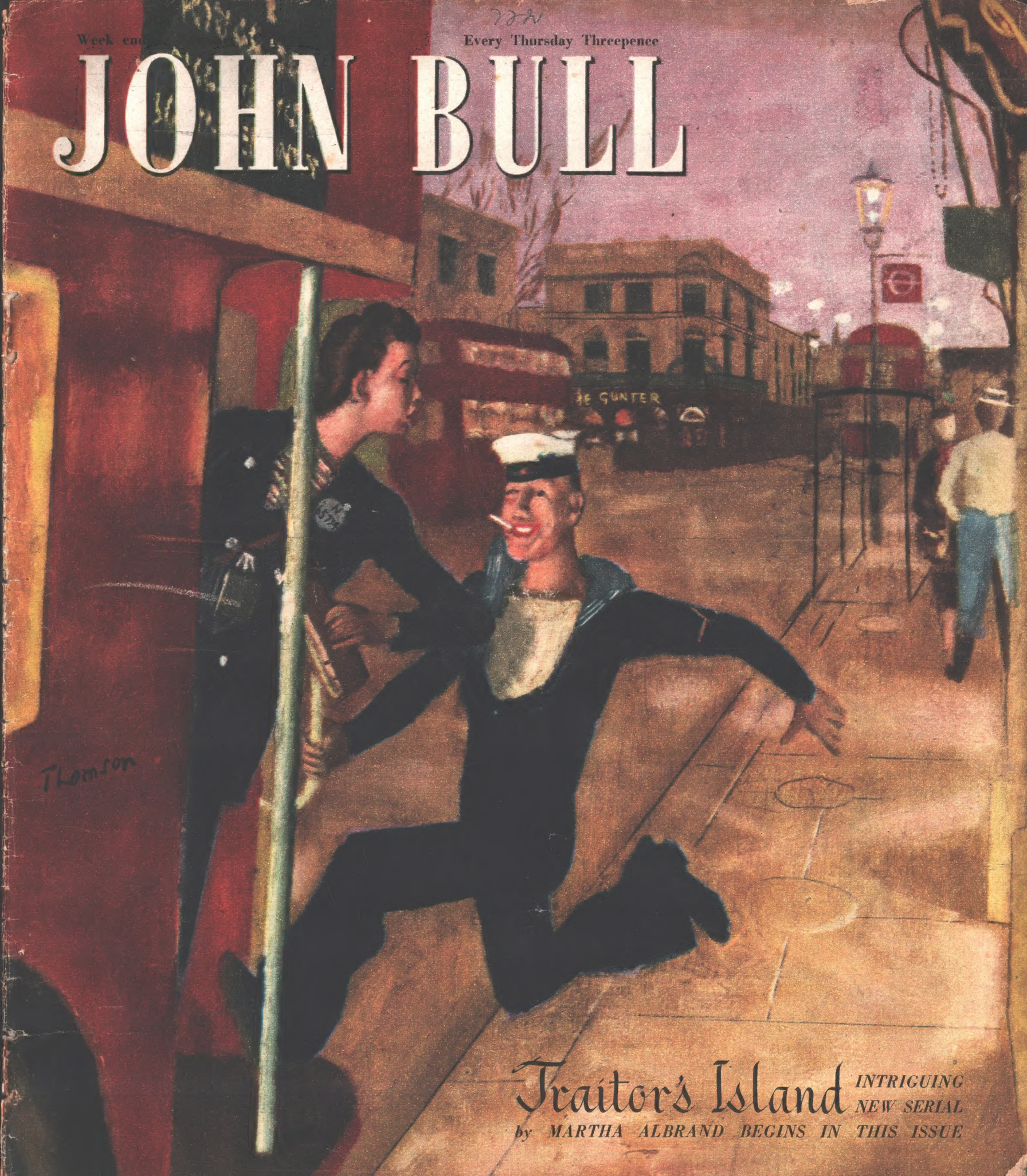
Week end

Every Thursday Threepence

JOHN BULL



Traitor's Island

INTRIGUING NEW SERIAL

by MARTHA ALBRAND BEGINS IN THIS ISSUE

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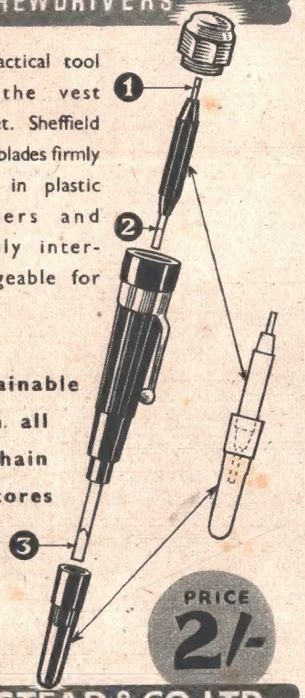

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The electricity surcharge

AN ADJUSTMENT of domestic tariffs for electricity has been introduced at the request of the Government. To curtail use of current during the peak periods, roughly one-third of a penny will be added to the normal running charge per unit during *three* winter months ; but the normal charge will be reduced by one-tenth of a penny per unit during the remaining *nine* months of the year.

Domestic consumers must use less electricity—

between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.—up to noon when the weather is very cold . . .

between 4 p.m. and 5.30-6 p.m.—and whenever you hear a B.B.C. warning.

These times apply 5 days a week, Monday to Friday.

Despite all handicaps, British Electricity are supplying 10% more electricity than last year and 80% more than before the war.

BRITISH ELECTRICITY

February, 1949

FAMEL SYRUP

FOR COUGH-FREE NIGHTS

Famel has brought sleep to millions of cough sufferers. Firstly, it calms down the nerves, so that your body can concentrate on killing germs. Secondly, Famel helps through its powerful antiseptic ingredient.

Famel keeps your throat smooth and clean—germs have little chance of taking hold. Get a bottle of Famel from your Chemist now. It is the great winter night-time standby in countless homes when coughs and colds are about.

2/6 *and* 3/9

Ask for FAMEL PASTILLES
They have the authentic Famel quality

SKIN TROUBLES

Amazing new treatment gets deep into the skin pores

If *you*, too, have skin troubles of any kind try Valderma. This white, non-greasy balm will quickly relieve most skin troubles.

There are two antiseptics in Valderma. Working together they get right down into the skin and kill off the germs that cause skin troubles. Irritation ends. Spots disappear. The skin looks grand. Cuts and sores clear up with amazing speed. If your skin does not improve quickly you may have a more serious complaint — so see your doctor. Valderma is white, creamy, non-greasy, and non-staining. Ask your chemist for a jar of Valderma and say goodbye to those skin complaints *now!*

Keep a jar handy for CUTS, ECZEMA, BURNS, RASH and many other skin troubles

DOUBLE-ANTISEPTIC

Valderma

THE *Non-Greasy* BALM

(178)

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SUPER Quality

Design BB

20 Years' Solid Service

Maximum Light, Correct Ventilation

Sides and ends in complete sections. Boarded (or aluminium) base. Framed ventilators. Half glass door. Mortise and Tenon joints. Glass, carefully packed, supplied cut to size and angles.

Long	Wide	High	Cash	Carriage Paid Home—England and Wales.
8 ft.	6 ft.	6½ ft.	£27. 3	QUICK DISPATCH.
8 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	£34. 1	Other sizes from £18.
10 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	£37.16	Send for FREE LIST:
12 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	£41. 5	Greenhouses.

Visit Showrooms! Open Daily incl. Sat. aft. till 5 p.m.

F. & H. SUTCLIFFE LTD., 82, WOOD TOP
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PHOSFERINE for a *quick* convalescence

When the body's reserves are brought low by influenza or other debilitating illness, and convalescence threatens to be a slow business, PHOSFERINE can do much to replace energy and strength. So responsive is the body to the help of PHOSFERINE that improvement may be looked for almost immediately—and every day will bring signs of returning strength.

1/6 & 3/8
In liquid or tablet form.

THE GREATEST OF ALL TONICS

for Depression, Debility, Indigestion, Sleeplessness & after Influenza.

take Fennings' LITTLE HEALERS

at the first sign of an attack of INFLUENZA BRONCHITIS OR COLDS

and Brighten your outlook

FROM ALL CHEMISTS
7d., 1/6 & 3/6.

Alfred Fennings, Horsham, Sussex

Big Prizes in the Sleep Drive!

MEN are always saying they know how hard we women work. But *do* they?

First there's the breakfast, then the washing-up. Then the beds, the grate, the dusting and cleaning! Then out to the shops and into the queues. Ration books, points, coupons!

No wonder we get tired. We even *wake up* tired! What we need is a spot more energy!

Well, our energy is controlled by food and sleep. Food is rationed, sleep isn't. How about a drive for more sleep?

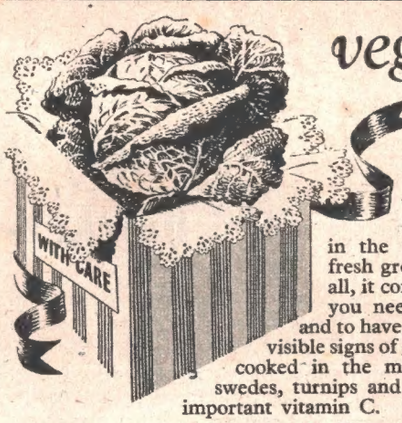
The trouble is, *more* sleep won't help us so much as *deep* sleep.

Only deep sleep restores during the night the energy we use up during the day. You prove this for yourself when you wake tired in the morning after 7, 8 or even 9 hours' sleep.

What we need is *deeper* sleep. This is where Horlicks can help us. A cup of Horlicks at night helps us to relax in deep, sound sleep. In the morning we really feel we can cope with the chores.

Yes, there are big prizes to be won in the deep sleep drive!

HORLICKS



vegetables are valuable

Yes — they are one of the most valuable foods for health. Dull? Not a bit of it, when you cook them in the modern way! This retains their fresh green colour and their flavour. Above all, it conserves their vitamin C; the vitamin you need to help you keep vigorously fit, and to have a clear healthy complexion and other visible signs of good health. So serve greens often — cooked in the modern way—and in addition, have swedes, turnips and potatoes for they also contain that important vitamin C.

The Modern Way TO COOK GREEN VEGETABLES

1. See that your greens are as fresh as possible. Wash greens thoroughly but quickly immediately before cooking. Cabbage and other large-leafed vegetables should be shredded with a sharp knife to make cooking quicker.
2. Put only enough water in saucepan to prevent burning — about a teacupful for each 2 lb. greens; add a little salt and bring to the boil. When water is boiling *fast*, add greens and boil *with the lid tightly on.*
3. Boil for only 10-15 minutes, shaking the pan occasionally to prevent sticking. Strain, and serve at once. Use any liquid left for soups, sauces, etc. It's good and good for you!

American Fried Cabbage

1 oz. margarine or dripping, 1½ lb. cabbage, shredded coarsely, 1 medium-sized onion chopped, pinch nutmeg, 1½ level teaspoons salt, 2 level teaspoons sugar, dash of cayenne pepper, 3 tablespoons vinegar, chopped parsley. Melt fat in deep pan over low heat. Add cabbage, onion, nutmeg and salt. Cover and cook 10 minutes over moderate heat, shaking frequently and taking care vegetables do not brown. Add sugar and cayenne to vinegar, mix well, pour over the cabbage. Mix well again, cover and cook for 5 minutes longer. Serve at once sprinkled with chopped parsley.

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (S.220)

Hard on her hands...

...but still her nails stay lovely!

With L'Onglex, long-lasting loveliness for nails can be yours in two minutes. The hardest jobs about the house do not harm the glass-hard glossy finish which L'Onglex gives to nails.

L'Onglex Liquid NAIL POLISH

IN 6 SMART SHADES

Tampax is worn internally—no belts, pins or pads. So comfortable. You're quite unaware of its presence!

It's discreet as well as dainty—no chance of embarrassment to me or others. Complete protection too!

Yes, Tampax freedom is priceless! Yet Tampax is low in price. Only 1/9d. and 2/- for ten!

For a dozen reasons, women who use Tampax bless the doctor who invented it! It's so simple to use, so quick and convenient, so *safe.* It's more hygienic, more comfortable. Yes, Tampax is protection in its daintiest, neatest, most complete and perfect form. *Yet it costs no more than less modern methods.* And the two absorbency sizes cater for *all* needs!

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Regular Tampax No. 1: Super Absorbent Tampax No. 2: in 10's—1/9 and 2/-. And in economical 40's packs—6/6 and 7/6

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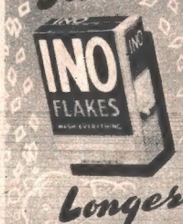

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WASH EVERYTHING

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☆Let's all Glow with Victory V GUMS & LOZENGES

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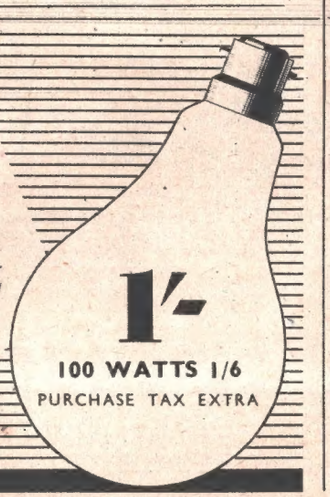

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100 WATTS 1/6

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Because Sylvan dissolves instantly even in cool water — no harmful hot water to ruin gay and dainty colours. Then Sylvan whisks up to the richest lather ever, so there's no harsh rubbing to shrink and mat delicate, fleecy wool . . . just easy, gentle squeezing in the purest, mildest suds — that's why only a soap like Sylvan can keep your precious woollens softer, fleecier, lovelier.

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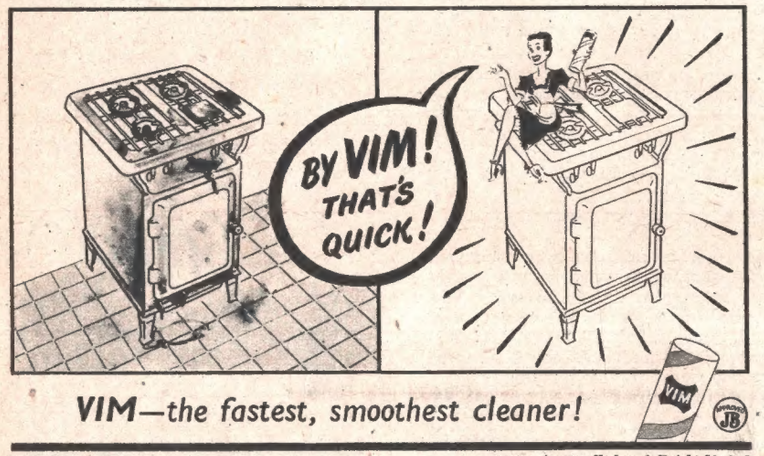

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FEBRUARY 19, 1949 VOLUME 85 NUMBER 2225

Summary Justice Must be Quicker—and Better

NEARLY EVERYONE AGREES that our summary courts—commonly called "police courts" still, although in fact officially renamed "magistrates' courts"—are badly in need of reform.

They are inadequate, overworked, slow, and often incompetent.

No wonder they make mistakes which figure in newspaper headlines, and inflict hardship on the individuals unfortunate enough to be victims of them.

It is fair to say that the deficiencies of these courts are realized, and some changes for the better are already contemplated.

For example, it is intended to retire magistrates who are over-age to the point of being unfit for their duties; to choose new magistrates for their ability and social experience rather than their political service; to provide courses in criminal law for magistrates.

These are reforms which are badly needed, and the sooner they are fully implemented, the better. But they are not likely to be enough in themselves, and some of the other proposals to improve the standards of summary jurisdiction are both more arguable—and more urgent.

For instance, the Home Office is stated to be considering "speeding up" the work of these courts.

This sounds fine, on the face of things—but it depends on what is really meant by "speeding up" and how it is to be done.

Under the existing system, the only speed shown is in dealing with routine cases in the city courts—and it is quite the wrong kind of speed.

Go into any central London police court first thing in the morning and watch the magistrate rattle through his handful of overnight charges.

You will see justice at its worst.

The proceedings often open with the appearance of women whose faces are as familiar to the court as the charge against them.

Almost invariably, each woman pleads guilty to soliciting. And quite invariably, a policeman reels off a brief account of how he saw her accost two or three men, who shook her off with every sign of annoyance. The jailer then reads out her previous convictions, which—by an odd chance obvious to everybody in the court except, apparently, the magistrate—seem to have occurred at fairly regular intervals.

A small fine is then imposed and off the woman goes for another month or six weeks.

The same routine is followed with the street bookmakers (or, rather, their runners, for the principals never seem to be caught). Then the motorists are dealt with like shelling peas; if they are wise, they plead guilty, offer some plausible excuse for speeding or parking offences and get off fairly lightly.

All this sort of work is rushed through, but, once it is over, the court goes to the other extreme and begins to crawl.

The law's delays are notorious. They are at their worst in the magistrates' courts when anything a little bit out of the ordinary comes up.

The evidence is taken down by the clerk in laborious longhand. The procedure is so painfully slow that most magistrates' courts cannot possibly finish their list on any one day, so case after case is remanded (having been part-heard, or even not reached) to a later date.

This means that everyone from the innocent witnesses to the possibly innocent defendant has to waste hour after hour, sometimes day after day, in attendance at the court.

Some cases, in which a good deal of evidence has to be brought together, take months to get through even this preliminary canter. (The Tarran and the Weitzman cases are notorious recent examples.)

What's the remedy? Surely it is to appoint many more magistrates and to ensure that witnesses shall give their evidence and cases be heard as efficiently as possible.

At present, except in a few courts, chiefly in the big towns, the duties of magistrates' clerk are undertaken by local solicitors who "sit in" for a few hours a week. Some of these men have done—and are doing—a very good job, but their semi-amateur status does not make for the highest efficiency, and it is hard to see how they can help being biased sometimes when local people are involved.

The type of man needed is a full-time professional clerk, qualified in criminal law, able to be much more of a technical assistant to his Bench—and preferably a stranger to the neighbourhood.

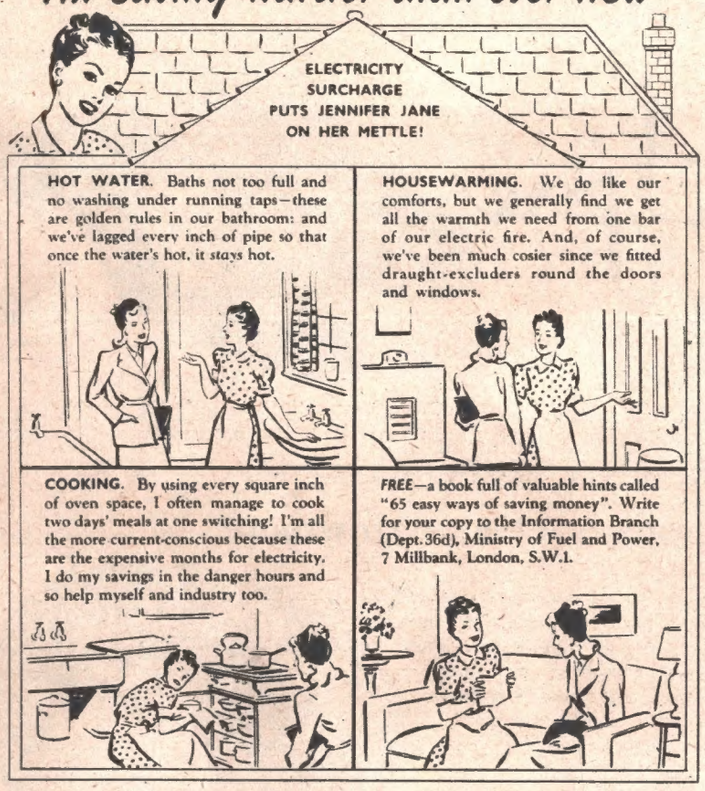
He should also have the best mechanical equipment.

There are a very few courts in the country — Essex is a shining example—where noiseless typewriters are used to record the evidence, with a vast saving of time. This should obviously be done in all courts.

And if a case cannot be completed in one day, then the court should sit on the next day to finish it, rather than keep everybody waiting over long "remands." Many a defendant, ultimately acquitted, has lost his job and his reputation by being brought up again and again at a summary court over the period of time it takes for the hearing of a complex case.

However fair the hearing, this is not "justice."

"I'm saving harder than ever now"


ELECTRICITY SURCHARGE PUTS JENNIFER JANE ON HER METTLE!
HOT WATER. Baths not too full and no washing under running taps—these are golden rules in our bathroom: and we've lagged every inch of pipe so that once the water's hot, it stays hot.
HOUSEWARMING. We do like our comforts, but we generally find we get all the warmth we need from one bar of our electric fire. And, of course, we've been much cosier since we fitted draught-excluders round the doors and windows.
COOKING. By using every square inch of oven space, I often manage to cook two days' meals at one switching! I'm all the more current-conscious because these are the expensive months for electricity. I do my savings in the danger hours and so help myself and industry too.
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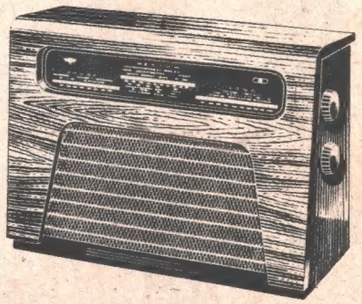

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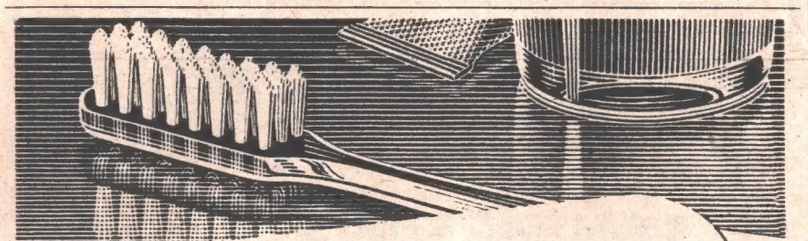

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It takes better care of your teeth

ORDINARY TRIMMING

'RONDATED'

'Rondated' nylon is just as stiff and strong and searching, but see — and *feel* — how the little nylon strands are smoothly trimmed. No risk now of scratching tender gums or scoring the polished surface of your teeth.

GENTLER FOR GUMS,

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Hair that is dull, thin and spoiled by dandruff needs treatment. It needs nourishment. It needs Silvikrin. A few minutes' finger-tip massage with Silvikrin each day will soon bring back the gleam of life and vigorous growth to tired hair. Try it and see!

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THE HAIR'S NATURAL FOOD

Use Pure Silvikrin in severe cases of dandruff and thinning hair. As a daily dressing use Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion or, for dry heads, the new Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion with Oil.

22/E/U

THANKS TO GOOD BRITISH FARMING

A WINTER'S NIGHT and there, in the glass of beer you are drinking, glints some of the long summer sunshine. What grand company malt and hops make for each other when the brewers' art goes hand in hand with the farmers' untiring skill!

Beers brewed by
WHITBREAD
Naturally

Fitting for everyday wear

Spire

Unequalled in appearance, comfort and value. A typical 'Spire' shoe selling at 54/-

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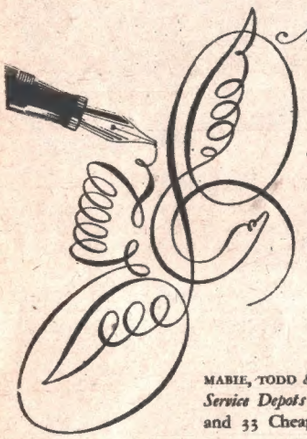
Sold by good retailers · Made by G. T. WHITE LTD. at Kettering



Make writing a pleasure for years to come

The pleasure? A smooth flow full of character—your own. The service? The Swan pen is made with a watchmaker's precision and 20/30 years' service from a Swan nib is by no means unusual.

From all stationers and jewellers
Lever-filling 25/8 to 36/8 Leverless 30/7 to 55/-
including Purchase Tax. External nibs extra.

MABIE, TODD & CO. LTD. 41, PARK STREET, LONDON, W.1. *(Administration only)*
Service Depots & Showrooms: London, 110 New Bond Street, and 33 Cheapside. Manchester, 3 Exchange Street.

There's a lasting liking for Weston's Oval Arrowroot

Sweetish but not too sweet—plainish but not too plain. A biscuit for anyone of any age at any time, because it has the kind of goodness which all can appreciate, and because it is easy to digest. Supplies are still limited, unfortunately.

Weston's
BISCUITS

Who'd believe that only last week her nerves were on edge!

When nerves play their queer, frightening tricks on you—then is the time for a course of bracing Wincarnis. A wineglassful taken mid-morning and before going to bed, will have a wonderful tonic effect. Wincarnis is a wine fortified with extracts of beef and malt and glycerophosphates. You will hardly find a pleasanter, more palatable way of bringing yourself back to normal health.

For DEPRESSION · LOW VITALITY · NERVOUSNESS
POOR APPETITE · EXHAUSTION · AFTER ILLNESS

WINCARNIS
Delicious · Invigorating

15

'Soupy' says:
A roast and this!
Oh me! what bliss!

SYMINGTON'S
VITE-GRAVY
-is simply grand

Mmm! Smooth gravy, rich and full-flavoured like mother used to make! . . . Use Vite-Gravy also in meat pies, stews and shepherd's pie—for the tastiest dish ever! 3d. and 9d.

W. SYMINGTON & CO. LTD., MARKET HARBOROUGH

Introducing VAPEX VOLATOL

Vapex in ointment form. A soothing, penetrating, warming rub for the chest. Non-greasy—does not stain skin or clothing. Ideal for children's colds. In handy tube pack.

Of Chemists 1/9

V238a

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Smoother hands
easier washdays
with FAIRY soap

Your hands will stay smoother when you use Fairy Household Soap. That's because Fairy is pure soap and contains no harmful soda. Mild and thorough in action, Fairy cleans the dirtiest wash completely, easily—and is safest for skin and delicate fabrics.

Always ask for Olive Green FAIRY SOAP

She opened her mouth to scream, but no sound came. As he reached out his hand to touch her, the figure began to sway, to grow dimmer, to disappear

Traitor's Island

Italy, five years after the bloodbath.... Starting a new John Bull serial of intrigue and romance

by MARTHA ALBRAND

AND THEN, for the first time, Webb Carr really saw the house. The house which for so long had haunted his dreams and thoughts until, with returning health, he had succeeded in pushing from his mind every conscious memory of that desperate hour; and at last it had all faded into such unreality that he could no longer imagine ever having been a living part of it.

As the small rowing boat rounded the north side of the island framed by the white peaks of the Alps, the boatman had pulled up the oars, and now they were gliding almost soundlessly, still carried by the last powerful stroke, across the quiet water of the lake.

Leaning against a few worn and badly soiled cushions in the rear of the boat, Webb felt, with a resignation which was alien to his character and whole temperament, that an insane blind force had propelled him to this place. He had been brought back to the tiny rocky island of San Ricci as relentlessly as a sudden gust of wind might pick up a straw to transpose it to some other place, senselessly, wilfully, but with mysterious determination.

Yet in some inexplicable way he had always known that he would return. And though his peace of mind, his steady, successful work during the last few years had perhaps been possible only because of this deep and secret knowledge, he had reacted with shocked surprise when last week, for the first time since the war, the name of de Cresti had been mentioned to him.

"Didn't you tell me, Webb, that when you were in Italy during the war you ran into some people by the name of de Cresti? Curious, but we've just got an inquiry from the New York branch. . . . Don't know if you feel like going over to Italy. . . ."

Unexpectedly, suddenly, the present reached into the past, dragged at memories lulled into forgetfulness by sheer necessity or simply crowded out by more recent experiences; and Webb, unwilling for a moment to meet the bright, shrewd eyes of his colleague, had gone over to the window and opened it to the roar of traffic and the sultry, worn and heavy air of the city.

"The de Crestis I knew are all dead," he'd answered, watching the pigeons light on the windowsill of a building opposite theirs. *And Julie is dead. How did she die? What terrible death did she suffer in the end?* And he had gone on

He had always known he would return. Now, the painting gave him a reason. But Webb's interest went far beyond works of art. As a wartime agent he had left unfinished business at San Ricci

talking. "Of course, there may be other families with the same name. Or relatives. What's it all about, anyway?"

In his mind he was fighting the desire to go back. It wasn't just going back to a place. It was going back to a time, too, a time he now wanted to forget: a period when, as a special agent, he had been operating with a mixed British and American company in Italy.

The intervening years, and the solid success he had made of his postwar job, could not, however, bury the memory burned so ineradicably into his mind.

The son of a British father and an American mother, he had been unable to decide for most of his life just what, temperamentally, was his nationality. His war experience with a mixed force served to strengthen the compromise. His postwar job as London chief of an American legal firm reinforced it.

A Titian had been offered to the president of the Monaghan Aeronautic Corporation in New York, and he wanted to buy it for his home-town museum. The experts already had agreed that the price asked—125,000 dollars, about £25,000—was not too high for a painting of such quality, but they suspected that it might have been stolen or perhaps represented war loot.

It was known to have been for centuries in the possession of an Italian family named de Cresti, but the American dealer had bought it through a Swiss agent whom he had known for a long time. The Swiss—a man named Paolo Suter—refused to identify his client, who, for reasons of his own, insisted that his name be kept a secret. This in itself was not unusual in a deal involving such a rare and valuable painting, which had been sold without the permission of the Brera, the official custodians of Italian works of art.

But to be absolutely safe, the New York office had advised their client to have ownership definitely established before closing the deal.

THE boatman interrupted Webb's reverie, "See, the de Cresti palace."

He lifted the right oar again, drops falling into the water, glittering in the bright, clear sunlight like diamonds carelessly tossed overboard.

"Before the war," he said, "before the old count died, it was open to the public once a week. Every Wednesday, that is. Quite a few people came to look at it. British mostly, or Swiss. The French don't travel very much, do they? But the Germans showed great interest, and occasionally Americans——"

Webb pushed at the awning, fastened on small iron rods, which formed a protecting roof over the boat against rain or sun. Very clearly then he could see the outline of the house; the tall cypresses on the first small terrace of the garden throwing dark shadows on the peeling and blistering pink paint of the façade; a narrow balcony running the entire length of the second floor. The long french windows facing the garden were standing open and a thin flag of smoke rose over the roof.

That other time, when he had first come in the stormy, secret dark of night, there had been no sign of life; no window open, not for days, not until the night Julie arrived.

Pink, thought Webb, pink. A low pink building squatting solidly behind the old trees. Low and pink and with many windows. He had never seen the outside in daylight, and never before seen it from the lake. It looked comfortable, almost gay. Perhaps it was just the colour, this ridiculous pale pink of stone against the blue of sky and the dark and light shades of foliage, which gave it an air of warmth and casualness.

He had pictured it differently, had remembered it as something sinister, heavy, almost like one of those grim castles of centuries-old stone surrounded by a wide, dark moat. He knew then that his imagination had drawn only on his sense of touch to form a picture of it. The touch of chill, sweating walls, walls hewn into rock, of scorpions nestling in the stone and fat water rats finding their way from the lake into the house.

Now there was the fragrance of flowers, alive and sweet, and as he let his hand slide through the water, it was sun-warm and soft, caressing his fingers with a strong, vibrant flow.

BY the stairs leading into the water, a small sailing boat was made fast to a pole which showed blue and white stripes, but the gold of the rounded top had faded. Blue and white, topped with gold. And the memory of a girl's voice answering his question, "The colours of the family, you know."

Whenever he had tried to remember her face, it had carried only one expression—masklike with fear, her petrified eyes staring at him but not seeing him, staring through him and past him into some nameless terror.

He turned his head away from the pole and towards the stone terrace high above the lake and level with the house. Leaning against the low white balustrade stood the tall, black-clad figure of a woman. The boatman suddenly bowed and touched his cap, but his greeting was not answered.

"The old lady," he said. "She sees only those she wants to see and hears only what she wants to hear." His voice, though respectful, sounded hurt.

"Who is living here now?"

The man, nodding towards the terrace, looked at his passenger in surprise. "The family, of course. No one else has ever lived here. They let it stand empty during the war, but then they all came back—that is, all those who hadn't died. All the women are back. It's a large family, *Signor*. The Contessa Francesca is the head of it."

SO his assumption that some relatives of the family were still alive had been correct. He had arrived only yesterday in Switzerland and gone by car this morning to Orta, the little village which gave the lake its name.

The boat rounded the island again, and now at the south side there were the proud crowns of chestnut trees with long straight catkins shading the *piazzetta*. A low stone wall, broken in places over which lizards hurried, and an empty, rickety pier.

"Do you want me to wait for you, *Signor*? I think it would save you trouble. We had a motor-boat coming up from Omegna and stopping here regularly before the war, but since petrol can be had nowadays only if you're willing to sell also one of your eyes——"

"Come back for me in two hours."

Webb walked quickly across the black gravel of the narrow piazza and up the low, white half-moon steps leading to the church.

He had known about the island of San Ricci long before he had ever come to it. Each single little detail had once been pointed out to him on greatly enlarged photographs. The spire of the ancient church rising high above the almost square building of the seminary, and the low roofs of the houses built all around it. He knew, without ever having walked them, those steps sweeping up to the church and—a last temptation—turning just before the entrance portal to form the small passage between high walls in which the dead of the island had been for centuries buried, and perhaps still were.

After a few yards, the passage led, he knew, past the restaurant into the tiny square, with its deep, everlasting well from which the monks of San Ricci and all the islanders drew their drinking water. And, perhaps almost as well as the boatman, he knew the villas, not more than thirty of them, forming a circle, their backs facing the path which separated them from the seminary, with the lake at their front doors.

Four years ago there had been no need to walk this very path to find the shelter from which to go on with the task. Plans had worked to perfection. The leader of the partisans behind the German lines—a man called only Pietro, whose real name nobody knew—had established contact with the Allied force and made all the arrangements.

Once dropped into the vineyards which bordered the lake on the south, they—Frank and he—had been met by Augusto, who was working under Pietro's orders. They were handed the key to the Palazzo de Cresti, and during the next night they were taken across the rough waters and landed in front of the house.

WEBB'S fingers opened and closed as if he were feeling again the weight of the big, heavy key. He glanced automatically at the walls, at the inscriptions in the flat grey stone, his eyes searching for a name: "Giulia de Cresti, May 5, 1927—December, 1944." It was, Webb knew, part of the memory, the dream, the nightmare, that he was to blame for having dragged Julie into the desperate brutality of war.

He stood still, gazing out across the water, listening to the sound the small waves made splashing against the shore. "But don't you understand?" Julie had said. "What is there for me to care about? My parents are both dead. My husband, Jacopo, was murdered by a group of Fascists, and his brother, Carlo, died in a bombing raid. They were my cousins.

"No, I'm not afraid. I have nothing to lose, don't you see? I can be of help. I know the neighbourhood and I know the people and they trust me."

For a long time now Webb had been almost at peace, telling himself that one more death in all that dying didn't matter. That survival amid all the brutality and violence of those years was a mere question of luck. That it was ridiculous to feel responsible for her death, or Frank's, or for the death of those seven other men who had been trapped, or for the failure of his job and the subsequent death of others.

But as he followed the winding path, narrow and cobblestoned, Webb suddenly dreaded entering the house and confronting one of the de Crestis, dreaded standing opposite the tall black figure of the old lady who had ignored the boatman's polite salutation and being asked why he had ever permitted a seventeen-year-old girl to risk her life.

Suddenly, then, he heard the bells, high and deep above him. The bells of San Ricci. The whole sky seemed to be filled with their echo, and Webb felt himself tossed back into the forgotten years, and the sound he had heard so often and by which he had learned to check time and achievement made him tremble. Why had he failed?

Above him, swallows, scared away from their nests in the old tower by the incessant tolling, swirled into a cloud, escaping momentarily from the island, out towards the lake. A group of small boys dressed in the white surplices of the choir, their closely cropped heads bent over their prayer books, passed him behind the enclosure of the seminary, on their way to Mass. The shadow of a tall monk fell across the path, stopped, hesitated and walked on. Webb pulled himself together sharply.

He had done his best. No one had the right to ask for more. But within him the wound, never quite healed, seemed to burn with a deeper and more penetrating pain.

Now he stood in front of the de Cresti door, looking at the coat of arms carved into the heavy oak. He pushed the heavy knocker against its plate, and as iron struck iron, re-echoing inside, into his memory hammered another sound: the enemy, the Germans, breaking down the door to the passage.

The door was flung back, and on its threshold Webb saw, like an apparition, a tiny old woman. From the round, deeply lined face, a pair of eager, questioning eyes fixed suddenly on him, looking him shamelessly up and down. Then, as he reached for his wallet to take out his card, a tiny clawlike hand, shrunken and fleshless with age, shot forward towards the small white piece of cardboard.

At the same moment a high, frenzied voice, accompanied by running steps, shrilled through the dim hall, "Angelina, Angelina! What are you doing? You have no business opening the door! Get back, will you?"

A maid, in a black alpaca uniform, snatched at the card, pushing the old woman gently but determinedly aside.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Like a spider, that's what you are! You're waiting at every door, shooting out before any one of us can come up from the kitchen! Just because you're too old to work. . . ."

ANGELINA stood rigid, listening to the rapid mutter with her eyes closed, but suddenly, unexpectedly, moved backwards and, turning with silent, weightless speed, butted the maid in the stomach and grasped the card, giggling to herself.

Staring after her, noticing for the first time that she was a hunchback, Webb remembered Julie's low voice telling him about old Angelina, her grandmother's crippled maid. Then the tall, erect figure dressed in black, leaning against the white balustrade, was not some distant relative living in the Palazzo de Cresti but Julie's grandmother.

Webb stepped into the hall. And as the door fell shut behind him he recognized what he had inexplicably forgotten—the impression this hall had made upon him when for the first time Julie had thrown back the heavy wooden inside shutters from the wide french windows, as the maid was doing now.

Then, as now, it was suddenly flooded with light, with the sharp, bright Italian sun. There, creeping up the walls, was the family tree, branching out, intertwining till it joined in a wide crown on the high, rounded ceiling. The names of the de Cresti men were set in gold against the black paint of branches, while those of their wives and relatives were coloured in soft hues of blue and pink. And there was an inscription in old Gothic letters: "If You Enter the Palazzo de Cresti You Enter History."

"Will you follow me, please?"

The stairs were still uncarpeted, as

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Carry On—Sergeant-Major ! *by HARRY HOPKINS*

Prelude to busy day: eighty-one year old Walter Mason delivers morning paper. Other veterans share his belief: "Keep at it and you're all right"

Today in Britain, many old people prefer work to lonelinesss. Indirectly, the young benefit, too

THE SERGEANT-MAJOR is eighty-one, and since his wife died he's lived with his married daughter at Benfleet in Essex. Every morning, he jumps out of bed at 6 a.m., makes himself a cup of tea, slings a green canvas bag over his shoulder and marches down to Knightleys by the station.

Outside the shop the other paperboys are waiting. There's white moustached Mr. Wesson, seventy-seven, who once worked in a machine shop, Mr. White, a seventy-four year old ex-glovemaker who these days judges at gardening shows, Postman Norman, who's sixty-six, and another sixty-six year older, Mr. Milton, a county council worker.

Between then and 8.25 a.m., when he gets back for breakfast, the sergeant-major delivers the morning papers—rain or shine—to seventy or eighty houses, brandishing the stick he always carries to scare off dogs, striding up and down the Essex hills as if he were back with the regiment on that epic march from Calcutta to Agra.

He doesn't dawdle over breakfast. For there's always a job to be tackled down in the churchyard. Perhaps a hedge that needs cutting, a gravestone some relative wants cleaning, or a batch of old wreaths to be burned. That's piece work—the Saturday morning path cleaning's his regular 7s. 6d. a week job.

A nap after lunch? Not on your life! It's "How's the tide?" and, if the answer in the paper's right, off he goes to catch the bus to Southend and an afternoon's fishing on the end of the pier.

Mondays are club days, with a film show or community singing or old-time dancing down at the pensioners' hall at Tarpots.

"I still enjoy a good dance," says the sergeant-major, and touches his toes with his hands by way of limbering up. "Oh, that?" he chortles, enjoying your astonishment. "I put it down to all the flag waving I had to do as a signaller."

Kipling's India to London's Blitz

For Walter Mason has travelled far since those days under the Indian sun when as Lord Roberts's signaller—"following 'Old Bob' about like a dog"—he was sending messages flashing on his heliograph at twenty words a minute across the dusty plains.

He was a lad of seventeen when he enlisted and went out to Kipling's India. When the Boer War came they brought him home, a grizzled veteran of thirty-two, to be an instructor. In the first World War, at forty-seven, they made him a sergeant-major, taking drafts across to France. When the Dorniers throbbed once more over London he was seventy-two—and a fire guard leader.

Now, as a newsboy in his ninth decade, life for Walter Mason is perhaps not quite so exciting. But from reveille at six to lights out at eight sharp, there's still hardly a dull moment.

At eighty-one, the sergeant-major is an invigorating example to many men years younger than himself. But today, he and his fellow newsboys are more than that. They are a sign and a portent of one of the most hopeful developments of our times. It is a development born in part of necessity.

In the days when Private Mason was up aloft in the minarets of the Taj Mahal at Agra, practising with his heliograph, the old constituted six per cent of the people of this country. Today they represent 13½ per cent. And the proportion is mounting all the time. Soon, the Insurance Minister, Jim Griffiths, warns, every three workers on our island will be keeping one pensioner and more than one child.

That is a tremendous burden. It could undermine our whole national standard of living. The demand for £2 a week pensions, recently advanced in a petition signed by 2,500,000 vociferous oldsters, sounds reasonable enough. But it would soon cost £500,000,000 a year—as much as all the social services put together.

To succour the old we should have to deny the young.

Rocking Chairs Went Sprawling

And that is where Walter Mason and his fellow newsboys come in. Dr. W. A. Sanderson, of the National Corporation for the Care of Old People, has calculated that if the old worked only five years longer, the burden would be halved. And it is on that principle that the inducement of increased pensions to men who work beyond the age of sixty-five is now being held out.

Today two out of every three are taking up that offer. When war came, grandpa kicked the rocking chair over and went back to the bench. He is still there, filling the labour gaps. "Office Boys—over Sixty," advertised a London publisher — and had seventy neatly written replies on his desk next day.

Recently a Willesden magistrate, aged seventy-nine, had before him a railway guard who was still at work at seventy-four. "What a monstrous shame that a man should have to work to that age!" he exclaimed. The man shook his head. "But it has been a pleasure to work," he said.

At the age of eighty-one, Walter Mason agrees. "Keep your brain occupied," he prescribes, "and you're all right." In lightening the burden of age for the state, such men are lightening it for themselves also. Boredom is the greatest slayer of the old.

Today people are living longer and keeping fitter. In 1855 the average man died at the age of forty. Even in the eighties anyone who managed to survive to seventy was a comparative rarity. Yet today the expectation of life of a woman at sixty is eighteen years. And out of our six million old people, only 200,000 are infirm or sick.

What the old want today, Mason will tell you, is not shawls, slippers and sentimentality, but a realistic recognition of their special needs.

Over 80,000 pensioners over eighty live alone. Many drag out bleak existences in utterly unsuitable houses. Merely nuisances to the young, steep stairs, awkward bathrooms, slippery floors can be nightmares to the old who lose their balance easily. They live in dread of lying helpless for hours before anyone notices them.

Laundry is the big bugbear of their lives. Now queueing has been added. Many live on bread and margarine. When transport is difficult they may not go out for weeks at a stretch. And, often, no one comes to see them.

In the midst of a great city, they are as cut off as if they lived on a desert island. They are victims of a society that has planned for much—but not for the needs of the old.

But today a new word is climbing towards the headlines, holding out new hope to the old in their sickness. The word is *geriatrics*. As a science it is very new, but its message is old and simple. It is "take up thy bed and walk." Its methods are massage, heat treatment, occupational therapy, diet, and—most of all—exercise and faith.

They Got Well at Ninety

Results have been sensational. At the West Middlesex Hospital Dr. Marjory Warren, head of the geriatrics unit, has restored to 500 out of 700 practically bedridden old folk the power of taking care of themselves again. Old men of ninety have gone in on stretchers to die and walked out on their own legs.

There are only six geriatric units in this country, but like the new retirement pensions and the Nuffield Foundation's National Corporation for the Care of Old People they are important because they mark the beginning of a New Deal for Britain's older citizens.

A New Deal that will begin in the old folk's home. In future, it is recognized, five per cent of all houses should be specially designed for the aged. So that the old folk may take their proper place in the family without becoming a burden to it, one doctor has suggested old folk's lean-tos tacked on to the big houses.

More orthodox is the group of small bungalows, specially equipped with things like handrails in the bathrooms, not segregated, but mixed in with ordinary housing, and with home helps and nursing services on tap.

Again, more towns must tackle old folk's feeding problems, developing devices like Chelsea's door-to-door ready-cooked meals lorry service. And for the assault on loneliness, hundreds more old folk's clubs are needed. An excellent model is the chain of Sons of Rest clubs built in public parks in the Midlands. Here, for subscriptions ranging from a penny to threepence a week, pensioners can enjoy each other's company, with tea at a halfpenny a cup.

But the thing that really keeps

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Traitor's Island

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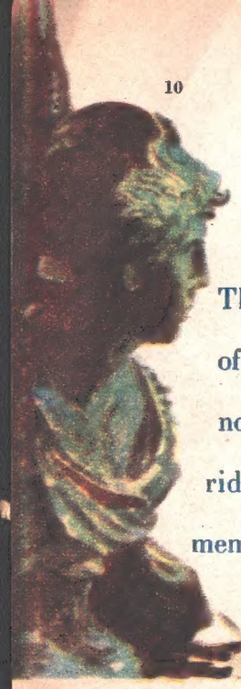


This gracious palace of the de Crestis was not the dark, scorpion-ridden hideout of his memory. What skeletons were in the cupboard?

they had been four years ago, and the hard, white marble threw back the echo of his tread as it had then, and with each step Webb felt that he was stepping into the past.

He fully expected the ballroom at the very end of the small anterooms he passed to look the way he had seen it last, dismal and empty, depressing in its unexpected width and height. But where he remembered bare stone walls, uneven and sweating in places, the dark damp spots standing out unpleasantly, Gobelin tapestries and heavy silks now hung from the mouldings, and scatter rugs softened his step on the parquet floor, which had regained its smoothness and sparkle.

From one of the chairs near the fireplace a young man rose, and after glancing quickly at the card, as if to check once more on the unknown name of Webster M. Carr, came towards him.

"Mr. Carr, what can I do for you?"

He was very tall, almost Webb's height, but of smaller, more graceful build, with a narrow, olive-skinned face and long-lashed, restless eyes.

SOMEHOW his appearance reminded Webb of Julie's, and suddenly he could recall, with the precise knowledge which had evaded him so painfully for all these last years, each little detail of Julie's face. Almond-shaped, large, deep brown eyes—the left one speckled with tiny dots of gold—the heavy brows almost meeting above the small, straight nose; the blonde hair just faintly brushed with red when the light struck it, the wide, mobile mouth between the narrow cheeks, and the way she would pull at the low, full underlip if something upset her or stirred her to reflection.

He stood motionless, oblivious of the cigarette case being held open for him. Asking himself, with a feeling that mounted to near-panic, why he had not recognized in the Titian shown him in London the familiarity of feature. Why, only three days ago, he had been so certain he had never seen the painting, and now, standing in the de Cresti house, he was equally sure that, of course, he had encountered it in the *palazzo*.

Piles of boxes, sometimes used by Frank and himself as seats and tables, and Julie warning him to be mindful of the treasures stored away there, but one night opening the top one in a high stack, showing Frank and him. . . .

"I'll be delighted to help you in any way I can, Mr. Carr."

Webb took the cigarette, a lighter snapped into flame between the thin, elongated fingers holding it for him, and Webb, glancing at the never seen, yet so strangely familiar, face, said, "May I know to whom I am speaking? I asked to see Contessa Francesca de Cresti."

"I know, but my grandmother preferred to have me greet a complete stranger. I am Carlo de Cresti."

In this room Julie had pleaded with him to accept her, and, to convince him of her reliability, had told him about the fate of her family, ". . . my cousin Carlo, Jacopo's brother, died in a bombing raid."

"You look startled, *Signor*," Carlo said, pushing forward a chair.

Webb, sitting down, forced a smile. "You must excuse me. I understood that there were no men by the name of de Cresti left."

"There are no others," Carlo answered, flicking some ash carelessly away. "My father died, my older brother was killed during the war. I am all that is left of the family. But," he added, sitting down and straightening the immaculate pleat in his trousers, "how do you, an Englishman, know so much about me? I feel flattered, of course."

About my age, thought Webb, thirty . . . thirty-three at the most.

THE thin, long-lashed lids drooped over the restless dark eyes. Webb said: "I forget who told me that you died in a bombing raid in Rome."

"There was a time," the last Conte de Cresti replied, his voice dropping, "during the war when it seemed opportune to be believed dead, even by your next of kin." He looked up and, just for a second, straight at Webb. "I gather you've been in the war yourself?"

"I have," said Webb. "I understand perfectly." *And your sister-in-law*, he wanted to cry out. *Do you know how she died?* But he didn't ask the question; there would be time for that later. He reached for his brief case and, opening it, explained the reason for his presence.

"A Titian?" repeated Carlo, lighting a fresh cigarette. "There was only one Titian in our family, and it's been stolen. The portrait of the Principessa Torresani—at least, so we think."

Webb brought out the photograph of the painting, and Carlo, taking it from him, walked away from the fireplace to the window, where the light was better.

"Yes, indeed! That is ours, Signor Carr. The one I mentioned. The one that was stolen."

"We thought that under the prevailing conditions in Italy, the family had perhaps been forced to sell it."

"Sell it," repeated Carlo, and then, as if it were senseless to offer any explanation to a foreigner, he simply shrugged. "No, it was stolen. Apparently, when the Germans withdrew to the north some of their men came to San Ricci. The house was raided. Quite a mess we found here." He broke off and stared at the picture in his hands. "In New York, you said?"

"In New York," Webb repeated, "and the present owner claims to have bought it through a reputable source."

"From whom?"

"He either wouldn't or couldn't tell."

Carlo turned back to Webb. "He could not have obtained legal permission to take a painting of this value out of the country."

"I wouldn't know. Nor is our client interested in that aspect. The one fact we have to establish is: did you sell it?"

"I told you, no. We suffered great losses during the war, but our estates still bring enough to keep the family from any such drastic measure. Besides, the painting is the property of my grandmother, who would rather part with a living relative than with an ancestor. As I handle all our business affairs, I can assure you that the Titian has under no circumstances and at no time been offered for sale."

"What do you suppose happened?"

CARLO shrugged again. Slowly he began to pull his lower lip between his teeth. "How could I tell? Any number of things. A German might have taken it and later on found it impossible to smuggle it out himself. He might have been forced to sell it. Or, once the Germans were known to have been here, any Italian might have tried his luck in a deserted house. Anyhow, the police never found out."

Webb did not answer. Yesterday afternoon he had seen Paolo Suter, the Swiss agent through whom the New York dealer had bought the Titian. And Paolo Suter politely but determinedly had refused to give out any further information. Webb decided not to mention him.

"I will have to get in touch with my lawyer at once," Carlo said.

"Taking steps to get it back?"

"Of course. I don't think there will be very many difficulties."

"Conte de Cresti," Webb said, "my client is prepared to pay one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars for the Titian to the legal owner, whose identity I have been sent here to establish. He has set his heart on buying it to give to a museum."

"The self-made man who wants to be remembered?" Even when he joked, Carlo de Cresti spoke with the essential arrogance of the Latin aristocrat.

But Webb was more amused than angered. "Possibly. But whatever his reasons—and, if you ask me, philanthropy is still one of the nicest by-products of human vanity—if and when you get the picture back, would you be willing to sell it?"

"I thought I explained that not I but my grandmother is the owner of the Titian."

The voice sounded harsh and impatient, but Webb, persisting as if he were not sensitive to a change of mood, said evenly, "May I ask you, then, to introduce me to the Contessa de Cresti?"

"I do not think that would be wise. My grandmother feels very strongly——"

"I understand."

"BUT your client doesn't!" said Carlo, suddenly jumping to his feet. "That is the trouble with those Americans! They always think they understand! They come into a country and read a few books, maybe, and proceed to tell us how to act and how to live! They do not understand pride or tradition. They do not recognize the soul of a country! They have no feeling for the intangible, no respect for history, and the only language they understand is money!"

The Italian spoke as though he included the British, too, in his wild and sweeping condemnation. Yet, surprisingly enough, Webb had no trouble keeping his temper, for it was only a small part of him which was listening to the raging young man and the furious words.

His conscious mind had long since taken him in fancy out of the room and into the long, secret passage which ran parallel to the very wall he was facing.

Originally the passage, as Julie had explained, had been built just as a means of escape, for it cut straight across the island; but through the years it had been blocked by rocks and earth tumbling down, so that by the time Webb had first entered it, it ran only for perhaps fifty yards, ending at a well, which had been kept clear in case of an acute water shortage. There had been a trapdoor covered with earth, just left of the well.

It was the sudden quiet that drew his attention back to Carlo de Cresti.

"I do not know how to ask your pardon," he was saying in a low voice, smiling now, the sullen, shy smile of a boy who had never had to apologize for anything. "Will you forgive me, Mr. Carr? The decline of my country and our great houses disturbs me greatly. Do you still want to meet my grandmother?"

"Yes," Webb said, "I would still like to very much."

He was left alone then, and as soon as Carlo had closed the door, Webb rose and went over to one of the six windows between the round white pillars.

How often had he stood here, watching for the dark shadow of the boat, the almost noiseless, carefully wrapped oars, watching for Julie and the men she had volunteered to row across the lake to get their instructions from him.

He heard the door spring open, and Carlo's voice, "May I introduce Mr. Carr to you, *nonna*?"

IN spite of her age, Francesca de Cresti stood to her full height, unbent by her seventy-three years. Her little ebony stick with a silver handle seemed only to underline, almost coquettishly, her erect bearing and her straight limbs, which needed no artificial support.

She stretched out a short, bony hand, and as Webb took it he knew that this hand was accustomed to being kissed respectfully.

"*Monsieur*," she addressed him in French, "I'm afraid my French is still a little better than my English; it always was. If you don't mind. . . ."

Webb didn't get every word, but he caught the sense and answered in perfect Italian, "I think it would be easiest for us both to talk in your own language."

The contessa's face did not betray surprise, but Carlo cried out, "And you let me make a fool of myself all this time, *Signor*! You speak wonderfully."

The old lady lifted her stick a little—a sign that she wanted to speak. "My grandson tells me, Mr. Carr—and it is with delight, as you will certainly understand, that we heard the news of the lost treasure—that you wanted to talk to me about a possible sale. Ridiculous. Quite ridiculous."

She made a little half turn, as if all were said and she were going to leave, when Webb stopped her.

"Do think it over, Contessa. Perhaps we might speak of it again next week."

"I beg you not to bother yourself."

"No bother," replied Webb. "Before I left London I arranged to spend my holiday in Italy. I will be here for quite a while." He turned to Carlo. "I will be interested to know what progress you make in recovering the Titian."

"It may take weeks, with all the red tape involved."

"If you think, Mr. Carr, that we might change our minds concerning a sale," Francesca said, her heavy brows knitting, "the de Crestis never change their minds, once they have decided about a matter of principle."

Their glances met, interlocked.

"Well, in that case I will just spend a few leisurely weeks in the charming little inn I found this morning."

He suddenly caught Carlo looking at him, his eyes unexpectedly fixed. As before, he was pulling at his lower lip.

"If you think, Mr. Carr, that by mere insistence you might finally win us over, may I tell you that you will be wasting your time?"

Webb noticed the tender tissue of Carlo's lip suddenly bursting; a tiny drop

of blood formed into a pearl, hung for a second, then fell and ran down his chin. Carlo made an impatient, annoyed gesture and brought up his handkerchief to wipe it away.

For a minute then the spell of the house and what it had once held for him broke, and Webb found himself thinking with the staccato action of a brain wholly awakened. Carlo hadn't said once that he was glad the Titian had turned up again. If it was that precious to them, he should have been much more excited. But he was excited. The sudden fit of temper. Why? Was he so nervous and passionate that he couldn't keep himself under control in the presence of a total stranger?

But, looking once more at the sullen and handsome face, as Carlo, nursing his lip with the point of his tongue, stood in half profile in the frame of one of the windows, staring darkly across the lake, Webb felt quite unaccountably that perhaps there was some angle connected with the Titian of which Carlo knew or guessed, but which he did not want to be known.

THE next second the Titian, Carlo, the old contessa lost all reality, wiped from his consciousness by the vision of a girl coming up the staircase leading from the water, climbing the last few steps to the level strip before the house.

He had had visions before. During his imprisonment he had experienced that kind of lightheadedness which comes from loss of blood and from sickness and starvation. At times he had been convinced he was losing his mind, and had not even cared.

Among the hibiscus bushes in their first seasonal bloom, the white dress seemed to come closer and closer with its own secret law of speed; closer and closer, until, quite unceremoniously, two slender, lightly tanned legs pushed through the green foliage of hydrangeas outside the windows and stepped up the one step of the middle window and into the room.

"Oh, sorry. I did not know you had visitors."

The figure drew back, unfastening a white lace kerchief from the blonde head, and the hand stopped in mid-air.

A small black book, a Bible, dropped to the floor, so near him that he needed only to stoop to pick it up. The figure seemed to glide across the room, then stood motionless directly in front of him, and there was a face, large, almond-shaped eyes, the left one dotted with specks of gold, a mouth opening wide, as if to scream, but no sound came; everything remained absolutely quiet, so deeply silent that the silence itself took on a quality of life; and just when he reached out his hand to touch the trembling lips which couldn't form a word, the figure began to sway, to grow dimmer, to disappear.

Then, just as suddenly, the silence was broken by the renewed tolling of bells and by running steps, and above all by the cold, authoritative voice of Francesca de Cresti. "Fetch my smelling salts, Angelina. Giulia has fainted."

NOTHING, for a while, made sense. Neither the words that were exchanged nor the motions of the other people in the room. Webb had entered a world in which the dead rose from their graves and without warning resumed their rôles in life as if they never had relinquished them.

It was her voice which sobered him—the low, soft voice whispering his name, "Webb?" And Webb realized, belatedly, that her shock in seeing him alive and in the very room in which they had parted must be as profound as his own.

"Hi," he said. "Hi." It had always made her laugh a little. "Hi, Julie"—and came to sit in the chair opposite hers. Sat very quietly, just looking at her steadily and reassuring her by saying once more, "Hi, Julie."

She didn't speak again, but kept her eyes fixed on his face, her eyes looking at his, looking away then quickly, only to return to gaze with deep concentration at the small white line of the scar on his chin, and finally, when her eyes had convinced her mind that it was Webb she was facing and there was no longer any possibility of error, she said, "I'm sorry;" and began to cry.

FRANCESCA DE CRESTI had no patience with tears. They were to be shed in the deep loneliness of night and behind locked doors, a relief one did not indulge in before others, and she said coldly, "What is this? Have you lost your mind, Giulia? . . . Mr. Carr, can you explain why my granddaughter should faint and then get hysterical at the sight of you?"

"And why do you call her 'Julie'?" Carlo asked, with a sudden harsh note in his voice. "Did you know each other?"

"Obviously," said Francesca, tapping her cane with annoyance. "But where did you meet? And when? And why weren't we told?"

"*L'Inglese,*" said Julie, regaining control of herself. "*L'Inglese,* don't you remember? I told you. I told you all about it! About him and Frank and the night the Germans came. "*L'Inglese,*" she repeated, and now for the first time she stretched out her hand and touched his, quickly, shyly. She had always been shy with him.

Had he really been in love with her, Webb wondered. Then and all these years past when he had not allowed himself to think of her—when he had believed her dead?

"*L'Inglese,*" said Francesca de Cresti, and she said it slowly, as if she hated to remember something which, for a reason unknown to Webb, was detestable to her. But, whatever it was, she forced herself to add, "If you haven't made it a rule to come to this house only without invitation, Mr. Carr, I would be happy if you stay for luncheon as our guest."

It was after the meal that Julie broke all traditions of the house. She put her cup on the table in the salon where they had gathered for coffee and, rising, said very simply, "I'm sure there are a great many things Mr. Carr and I would like to talk about which couldn't possibly be of any interest to the rest of you. Will you excuse me, *nonna*?"

Webb noticed the startled faces of the old aunts who had found a haven under the de Cresti roof. Old Contessa Lucretia, crippled in an accident, who pushed herself around in an old-fashioned wheel chair; her sister, Graziella, with the far-away look of the dreamer, never speaking, and Francesca looking up at Julie and then quickly at Carlo in quiet command to him to rise and accompany his sister-in-law. But Carlo remained seated.

"I will send Angelina with you; or better, Margherita. . . . Will you ring for me, Carlo?"

"*Nonna,*" said Julie, "please, times have changed, whether you want to acknowledge it or not."

"You are free to do whatever you want, but as long as you are living in my house——"

It was Carlo who intervened for Julie. "*Nonna,*" he said, lifting the old lady's hand to his lips. His voice was very soft, almost caressing, and Francesca, shaking her head, sighed.

"And that's how it is all over Italy," Julie said over her shoulder, walking ahead of Webb. "People won't realize that there was a revolution. That men and women and children threw everything aside — century-old habits and manners—to fight. In each little family there was at least one person who, unasked, unordered, without organization, went out and fought all by himself for freedom. And it was fine then. But now they don't want independent thinking or action. Now they want them docile again, so that—oh, well, I'm afraid it's a poor example, but *nonna* will simply not understand that I, too, no longer fit into the old pattern."

There was a note of rebellion in her voice which Webb had heard before. The afternoon when two *carabinieri* had come to make a routine search of the house. . . . He had not wanted her to be there, but Julie had thrown back her head. "Do you think I'm afraid? Don't worry, I won't give you away."

HE saw her as he had seen her then, dressed in mourning, the whiteness of her face accentuated against the black of her blouse. It was her youth, her tragic solitude, the audacity with which she faced danger which had made her seem so unreal in those days.

But she was real now. A young woman, a girl. The girl for whom he had once felt pity, admiration and love. A girl come miraculously to life again. No longer did danger keep them apart or make it impossible to talk about themselves.

To be continued next week

Carlo broke off and stared at the picture in the light. "Yes, Signor Carr," he said softly. "It was stolen"

Oh, these adult oppressors!

by LESLIE BREWER

Children are out for their rights—through their "union." What *will* happen should arbitration fail?

FOR SOME TIME NOW, teachers in various parts of the country have been discovering handbills left lying around in cloakrooms, hidden in exercise books, or sent sailing across the classroom from boy to boy in the form of darts.

The bills ask: "Are you a union member?" They promise support in all just causes, help in all difficulties, and "legal protection from assault by teachers and others, and from any other ill-treatment that the law doesn't happen to allow."

They are put out by the Children's Union, a body formed by bearded, twenty-eight year old Robert Copping and the pupils at his Staffordshire private school. The general aim of the union is to alter the laws of the country "so that life is pleasanter and freer for all those people now classed as 'children.'".

The project is ambitious; there are to be district organizers and branch secretaries. It has an attractive air of conspiracy; some of the members may have to work "underground." There is to be a news-sheet. And all this for a subscription of tuppence a week. Valetudinarians of eighteen and upwards are ineligible for membership, having become tainted by age.

"It's about time we were allowed to have a bit of a say," I was told by the fifteen-year-old branch secretary who collects my daughter's weekly twopence. "These days, most boys and girls pay a whale of a lot of tax. I bet, one way and another, I pay more in taxes a year than my grandfather ever paid.

"And yet, when I tried to have a word with our local Member of Parliament on one or two matters I believe might be changed, he more or less patted me on the head and told me to be a good boy and run away and play!"

This attitude, of course, complicates the work of the union members who maintain that they should be given a great deal more responsibility. Growing up, they say, is too strictly controlled in this country. There is a legal age for beginning almost everything.

A boy must wait until he is thirteen before he can buy fireworks but he may legally be given intoxicants at home as soon as he has turned five.

Must Hand Over Tobacco

If he is under sixteen, he may smoke cigarettes, pipes and cigars at home, or even in the back of the family car. But if he steps outside, a policeman or park-keeper may search him and confiscate any tobacco he has on him.

According to our law, a young rake's progress must follow set lines, though each birthday brings him new opportunities.

Until you are twelve, on no account may you start training as an acrobat. At thirteen, under severe limitations, you can earn an honest penny. Fourteen is a bumper year, when you cease to be a legal "child" and become a "young person" (though you will have been capable of "forming a criminal intention" since the age of eight).

You may now be sent to buy intoxicants, and the licensee is not obliged to see that the container is securely sealed and corked. You may also see the mysterious interior of a pawnbroker's shop and possess a real firearm.

Fifteen makes it legal to leave school, but not to beg in the streets. At sixteen you may marry (with parents' or magistrate's consent) and drive a motor cycle or an invalid chair. But you must wait one year more before you are trusted to take your wife out in a motor car.

At seventeen the criminal law recognizes you as an adult. You may become a barrow-boy, appear as a trapeze artist and have a glorious year before becoming liable for compulsory military service.

The new union's officials point out that all these laws governing what boys and girls may, and may not, do are confused and confusing. Maybe too many Victorian views on children *do* colour our laws, although the stern, humourless Victorian kind of parent is almost a figure of the past. Can't there be far fewer rules and age-barriers, and a lot more reliance put upon young people?

Two points already are receiving the union's attention. Quite a few boys and girls are pressing for the abolition of the "A" certificate for films. "As things now are, we can't go to see an 'A' film by ourselves. If an adult takes us, we can. What difference, please, does that make to the effect of the film on a so-called child?" they write.

There are now certain restrictions on boys and girls working for wages while they are still at school. Some boys and girls apparently think these restrictions have gone far enough, if not too far. "We don't want to go back to the days when six-year-old children worked in coal mines, but a lot of the new rules about employing us do seem a bit cissy. We can't work before 9 a.m. There's a drive on at present to stop us doing any kind of work in term-time. And please see the enclosed!"

The "enclosed" was a cutting of additions suggested by the Yorkshire Association of Education Committees to the Prohibited Employments List. Marked with bursting stars and exclamation marks was the proposal to prohibit boys from "working stage lights or acting as call boy."

The union isn't losing sight of members' individual problems while the "wider campaign" is being organized.

One boy in Portsmouth, for example, has written to ask for his step-father to be "investigated." A messenger boy in St. Albans believes that, being a messenger boy, he may smoke in public before he is sixteen. It seems that he is right.

Dictatorial; Dirty Work

Park-keepers and attendants at swimming baths in many parts of the country are having their crimes described and reported. It appears that they suffer from bossiness. And, if one letter is to be believed, there is a young schoolmaster in South London who indulges in very dirty work when "just looking through" boys' stamp albums.

And there is the problem of the gym frock, raised by a girl who describes herself as fifteen "but ten stone." She is made to wear this "brief, beastly" garment all day and every day because it is school uniform.

"The gym frock, showing yards of beefy leg, is fine for gym but a horrid, humiliating form of dress for a grown girl. It should be made illegal, banned or something, anywhere outside a physical training class. Please help!"

It would appear, indeed, that the Children's Union has a busy career ahead of it.

Disciples listen to Robert Copping's plan of campaign at Children's Union mass meeting

THIS WEEK'S COVER

A. R. THOMSON, R.A., who painted the cover, spotted this lively naval action as he walked down Fulham Road, London. Neat elbow-work by the clippie not only foiled the sailor's attempt to board a full ship in motion, but spoiled Thomson's illusion that "all the nice girls love a sailor." Thomson adds that he hung around bus stops for two hours to make sure he got the details of the clippie's uniform correct in his painting.

CARRY ON—SERGEANT-MAJOR!

Continued from page 9

the old young is the sense of being useful and wanted; the thing that really kills them is the sense of being in the way.

After twenty-one months interviewing every thirtieth old person in Wolverhampton, Dr. J. H. Sheldon concluded that one of the reasons why there are twice as many old women as old men was that half the women do all the housework up to the age of seventy-five—and a good deal of it even up to eighty-five. Men, on the other hand, gave up work abruptly, and, "bereft of purpose," fell victims to the "vacuum of retirement."

In spite of this enforced idleness, the doctor was greatly cheered by the old folk's mental vigour and courage. He wrote down eighty per cent as normal in mind, and seventy-one per cent as normal in body.

The fact is that the old of today are a remarkably spry lot. Take the case of Yorkshire mill owner Theodore Taylor, pioneer of profit-sharing. At ninety-eight he still travels forty miles to the office three days a week.

There is another side to this, though. A nation which keeps eager youth waiting for dead men's shoes is a nation on the way down. We do not want a country ruled by ancients. Is there any way by which the claims of Youth and Age can be reconciled?

Let us go back to Walter Mason on his 7 a.m. paper round at Benfleet. When Walter Mason gave up being a sergeant-major, did he retire? Maybe. Did he give up working? Certainly not! He became foreman to a firm of building material suppliers. And the second time he "retired" he started his new career as newsboy and handyman. He's still as busy—and happy—as ever.

Factory's Special Department

And, remember, in these days of labour bottlenecks, the wisdom of age has a practical value we should be foolish to ignore. Replying to a questionnaire about their old employees, scores of industrial firms refer gratefully to their responsibility and conscientiousness.

In the Dodge factory at Detroit, in America, there is a light assembly section known as the Old Man's Department. Though most put in a full forty-hour week, the hundred odd veterans who work there may come and go as they please.

In a Britain newly aware of the inner lives of its older people, every big plant should have such a department. Social and economic gains would be immense. At Cambridge today Professor F. C. Bartlett is already preparing the way with an extensive programme of research into the jobs most fitted to the elderly, and the best way of testing and training them for these "second careers."

One more obstacle to busy and happy old age may soon be cleared. The Insurance Minister, Jim Griffiths, has undertaken to reconsider the rule which docks from retirement pensions all sums earned over £1 a week. This is a powerful discouragement, for, perhaps more than most, old folk are reluctant to lose anything—even if it means having more in the end.

Today, Britain's six million hale and hearty oldsters are breaking from the bondage of the rocking chair to a new rallying cry: *Life Begins at Sixty-five*. And as—like our sergeant-major turned newsboy—they launch into new careers of usefulness, they give a renewed lease of life, both to themselves and to the nation.

THE FILM MAN WHO SCORNS STARS

The star system is threatened as film-making costs are slashed. But there's one man who prefers to do without them, anyway • *by JOHN K. NEWNHAM*

HARRY WATT is the film director with the somewhat startling belief that film stars are not necessary; that they are not only expensive, but in many cases an actual drag on a picture.

A burly, plain-speaking Scot, he'll tell you: "Stars are a liability—not an asset. They put up the costs of a production. They throw the story out of perspective because they want special attention to themselves. They want mollycoddling during the making of a film. They hold up pictures for months because producers queue up to wait for them. And in the end they make no difference to the financial success of the production.

"Stars are simply an insurance policy. Their names will draw people to the cinemas. Inevitably, because they are an insurance policy, insufficient attention is paid to the story. All the producer looks for is a vehicle for the star. Thus you get the rubber-stamp film."

Daphne Campbell (*The Overlanders*) showed that good films can make stars. But can stars save bad films?

Strengthen the Story

Watt does not argue against star *appeal*. He knows that an arresting personality can make a lot of difference to a mediocre picture. But his theory is that you don't need established stars to achieve this.

"The story should be the star. If you haven't got a star, you have got to make the story strong enough to appeal on its own. Your picture then stands up on its own value instead of having oranges given away at the door, so to speak."

A good film, he says, will establish a new star. His own film, *The Overlanders*, did so with Daphne Campbell. She was unknown before that picture. The moment it was shown, people began to talk about her. It did exactly the same thing for Chips Rafferty. This long, lean Australian, with his drawl and his grin, had tried more than fifty different jobs before he drifted into films. He had played in one or two pictures but was completely unknown outside Australia when Watt starred him.

From an economic point of view it's sound policy. You go out and find an unknown. You offer a salary of anything between ten and twenty pounds a week. And in return you get a new face, and, maybe, a better picture at half the cost.

Watt stars Chips Rafferty for a second time in his latest picture, *Eureka Stockade*. But the Watt idea is that you use the new star again only if you find that you have the right part for him. And if the star has boosted up his salary to abnormal figures you politely turn him down and find someone else. Watt has done just that several times.

Real-life Rôles

"When you get outside the range of professional players," he says, "you have a far wider choice. You cast your pictures with people who really are the characters. If you want a sailor, who can portray a sailor better than a real sailor? Not that I have any objection to professional actors as such."

When he was working with the old G.P.O. Film Unit, the predecessor of the Crown Film Unit, Harry Watt made *Target for Tonight*. His stars were aeroplanes; his cast consisted of R.A.F. personnel. That was during the war, but people still talk about it. And if the leading figure in it, Group Captain Pickard, had survived the war, the film world would have been wide open to him.

In those wartime days, Watt went up to Aberdeen to make *North Sea*. For days he sat behind the grill at the local labour exchange, studying the men coming in for jobs. Every now and then he arranged for one of them to come and talk to him. He cast practically the whole film in that way. His star was a local fisherman named Matty Mair. Watt was stuck for a leading player, and someone suggested Matty. Matty, out on a North Sea fishing job at the time, found Watt waiting for him when he stepped off the boat.

But Matty was too busy unloading fish to talk business, so Watt asked him to come along that evening. Harry went back to his companions, talking big about his discovery. When Matty turned up everyone wondered if Harry had gone crazy. For Matty was in his Sunday best. His hair was plastered down. His face was clean and shining. His suit was pressed. He looked more like a clerk than a fisherman; he also looked uncomfortable.

Watt soon had him back in his work-aday outfit, and that was how Matty Mair won screen success in *North Sea*. Matty has never made another film, though.

There was another man in that film who also caught the public's eye. His name was Bill Blewitt. Bill *had* appeared on the screen before. Harry Watt had starred him in a film all of his own, with the title of *The Saving of Bill Blewitt*.

Watt had been in a pub at Mousehole, Cornwall, when he got into conversation with a middle-aged man with a quirky grin. Harry found that he was the local postmaster. Within a few weeks, Bill Blewitt had become a film star.

Blewitt played in several pictures after that. Ealing Studios brought him up to London to appear in some of their productions. But Bill remained what he always had been—a village postmaster. He is still at his job.

Harry Watt will show you an enormous whisky flask which bears the inscription: "To Harry Watt, who made a ham out of me." It is signed by Quentin Reynolds. Watt put him into *London Can Take It* before he was established as a radio man here.

Watt quotes other examples of films making stars of unknowns. The armless ex-soldier Harold Russell scored a hit in *The Best Years of Our Lives*. The Italian films—so successful in this country—were made with stars never before seen or heard of over here.

Flash-in-pan Risk

What often happens is that the amateur, having made one hit, decides to throw up his old job and become a full-time actor. That sometimes succeeds. Often the newcomer simply helps to swell that vast legion of players scratching for a living in the film world. It's a risk which you have to take, Watt admits.

He agrees that there are great actors, but there are not many of them. The average film star is far from being a great actor. "And in films," Harry says, "the best actor is usually the actor who does what the director tells him. You use the trick of not giving him much to do at one time. I would say that it is easier to get an inexperienced actor up to the pitch of playing a scene well than to get a purely theatrical-background actor down to the reality of screen acting.

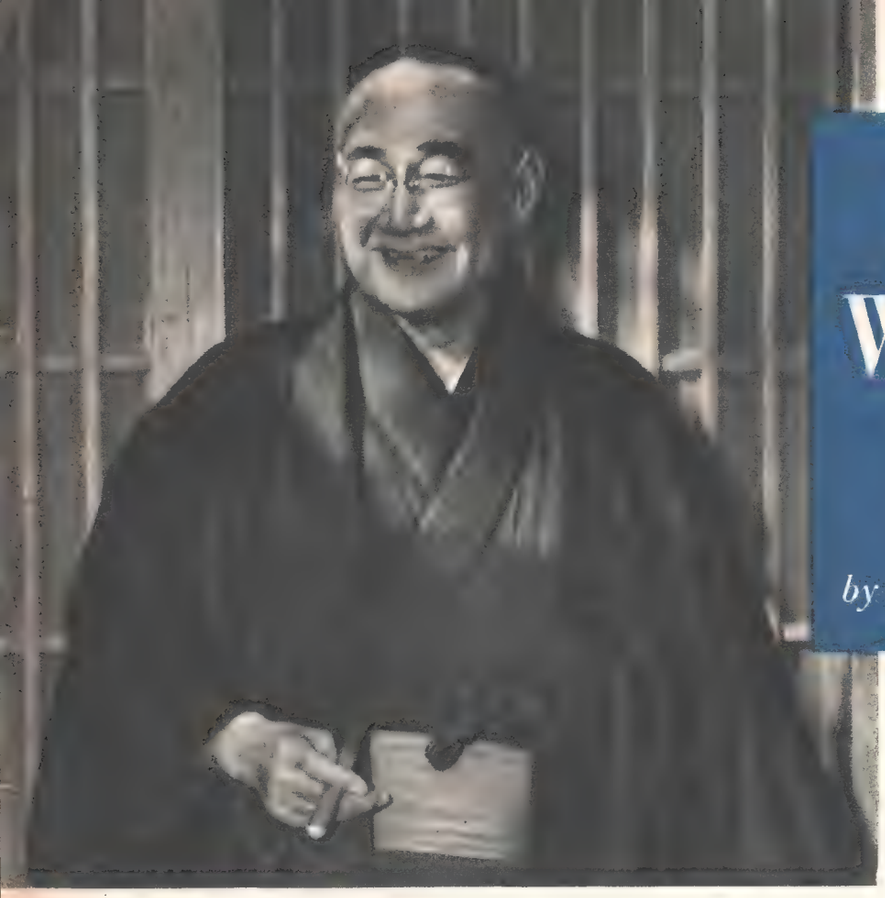
"Producers are far too apt to use players who are recognized as experts at one particular type of portrayal—and here again the player becomes a much-in-demand commodity, able to ask for ever-increasing payment.

"Yet I have found that you get better results by looking at actors out of their niche. In *Eureka Stockade* there is a little Scot named Al Thomas. He had been passing himself off as an American comic in Australia. When I met him, I accused him of not being an American at all. 'You're a Scot,' I told him.

"He admitted that it was true. He came from Glasgow, but had found it easier to get work by posing as an American. We talked things over, and I took him right out of his usual comedy work by casting him in a dramatic part as a Scottish miner."

Harry Watt's is a lone voice. Producers are still very star-conscious.

But if one director can thumb his nose at stars and make successful pictures, so can others. And if that happens, perhaps we shall get even better—and cheaper—films.



JAPAN WINS THE PEACE

by HESSELL TILTMAN

Smile and cigar cannot hide the dilemma facing Japan's re-elected Premier, Shigeru Yoshida: how to keep in with MacArthur without falling foul of Jap reactionaries who believe future is theirs

TOKYO.

THE JAPANESE WHO exercise real control in their country have succeeded in their objective. Through all the vicissitudes of total defeat, total demilitarization and total occupation, they have managed to cling fast to the three things vital to their future plans—the emperor system, the national structure of government and the tight-knit official bureaucratic machine.

The strategy used to achieve that aim was set forth in a master plan drawn up by one Kanji Ishihara, head of the ultra-nationalistic Japan East Asia Federation, during the frenzied closing days of the Pacific war.

The key paragraph of this cynical piece of "top secret" feudalistic planning dealt with the survival and expansion of reactionary influence in Japan under the Occupation:

"After the enemy lands, an underground will be formed depending on circumstances. This movement will be conducted under assumed names and principles. Although during the first phase of the Occupation we must operate with extreme caution, we shall actively step up our movement after the conclusion of the peace treaty. Preparations shall be completed before the Occupation ends, after which we shall inaugurate a vigorous political movement to bring the people quickly under control."

Thus the old ultra-nationalistic gang, even in the moment of defeat, plotted to foist the same old swindle on the Japanese masses. Under MacArthur, the names of the Japanese rulers have changed, but not the repository of power, nor the feudal methods employed.

Twelve years ago, a Japanese general explained to me that the Japanese Army was 100 per cent in favour of parliamentary government—provided only that the men elected to the Diet realized, of course, that their sole duty was to carry out the emperor's wishes. In those days this meant the army's wishes.

Japan's leading men still feel that way about democratic government. It is a grand thing as a façade by which to conceal what is really going on.

The Japanese political parties are still not parties in the British meaning of that word, but groups of cliques, each headed by a "boss" who intrigues and manoeuvres and makes deals for the benefit of himself and his group precisely as the Japanese clans of old manoeuvred and fought each other for supremacy. Personal loyalties mean more than beliefs or programmes or party discipline.

In prewar days, there existed in Japan two main parties—the Seiyukai and the Minseito. Although foreigners could detect little difference in their respective outlooks (both were ultra-conservative) so loyal were party members to the respective "bosses" that in many parts of Japan's feudal countryside, children of Seiyukai parents were not allowed to play with children whose parents favoured the other party and *vice versa*.

When the Boss Appears

The same sort of feudalism lives on in Japan's factories. It is probably the last country on earth where workers bow low when the boss appears. And where factory hands and lorry drivers may be seen, at the beginning of a day's work, drawn up in military formation, taking orders from the foreman.

It is no coincidence that, with the reactionaries still firmly in control of daily life, corruption is today the biggest "industry" in MacArthurland.

The Osaka Arsenal and other scandals involved the "disappearance," during the months following the surrender of Japan, of 700 billion yen-worth of government-owned raw materials from Japanese Army and Navy warehouses and arsenals, comprising virtually the whole of the huge stocks accumulated by the Japanese armed forces. Months ago, a Japanese Government report admitted there had been unearthed 2,184 cases of official corruption involving officials or business men, in which prosecutions had been ordered.

In the Showa Denko scandal which recently rocked political Japan, a private company distributed tens of millions of yen in bribes to politicians in anticipation of favours to come. Among forty leading Japanese Government officials implicated in the unsavoury mess was the then Premier, Hitoshi Ashida, whose coalition cabinet fell when some of its chief supporters were arrested.

Too Rotten to Cure?

Spring-cleaning Japan's parliament is one of the tasks facing Premier Shigeru Yoshida's Democratic Liberal Party, which in last month's elections gained a clear-cut majority in the House of Representatives.

Yet honest Japanese admit that reaction and corruption are so rampant in the public life of their country that seventy-year-old Yoshida's newly won mandate is unlikely to have much effect.

They know the forces controlling Japan under General MacArthur represent the same old feudalistic strata of Japanese society that exercised its baneful control before the war—and which has since repented nothing except that Japan lost!

They know that many of the political and industrial "purgees"—the men who have been banned from public office for supporting the Japanese Army in its career of international brigandage—still wield power behind the scenes and are cockily confident they will be back in their old jobs before long.

They know that the democratic forces in Japan could not, in their present state of development, withstand such forces for a single day after the Occupation ends.

They know that these people have, by skilful obstructionist tactics, sabotaged or at least rendered harmless to their designs, most of the MacArthur reforms. And they know that those Japanese officials with any real claim to be democratically minded are today trying to hide in self-effacing positions and dodge promotion to avoid the danger of possible retribution later.

Despite these facts—facts that are admitted by most newspaper correspondents in Japan—General MacArthur's official pronouncements on the progress of the Occupation have invariably been studded with superlatives.

The enactment by the Japanese Parliament, under G.H.Q. pressure, of some local government reform bills moved the Supreme Commander to the point of ecstasy in which he declared their passage into law "prepared the way for eventual full realization of the most lofty ideals of a democratic society."

Honest observers are frightened when they see a Japan wallowing neck deep in reaction, corruption and intrigue depicted as a nation of converts to democracy.

The truth is that the organized enemies of democracy in Japan have chalked up two considerable achievements. They have survived the Occupation. And they are winning the peace at a fast clip.

The *Mein Kampf* of those reactionaries is ex-Premier Tojo's 65,000-word "history" of the Pacific war, presented to the International Court at Tokyo which was trying Japan's No. 1 war criminal.

This document, in which a Tojo with nothing to lose shot the works, was published in the Japanese language by permission of General MacArthur's headquarters, complete with a foreword which informed the Japanese "this document brings to light the truth" concerning how a peaceful Japan was goaded into "a war of self-defence by Britain and the United States."

For this final disservice to his country, Tojo—who died on the scaffold and who in 1945 was being sneered at by his disillusioned countrymen as "Idiot Tojo"—is today spoken of as "Tojo Sensei" (Tojo the Teacher).

Emphasis on Docility

Had General MacArthur, whose political philosophy is akin to that of a Victorian Liberal, not been so afraid of the inevitable untidyness inseparable from the birth of democracy in a feudal land, it would still have needed time, measured in generations, to make any lasting impression on Japan's age-old mental processes.

As things turned out, the blueprint for a democratic Japan had hardly been drafted before the objective was switched. Now the emphasis is on docility, not democracy. And with emperor worship, the family system, and the old respect for authority both inside and outside the home alike undented, there exists no hope of accomplishing any radical transformation in Japan's political and social ideas.

True, events have not shaped exactly as Japan's Old Guard anticipated.

Two years ago, they expected that by now a Pacific peace treaty would have been signed and their nation returned to them. Today Japan faces the virtual certainty of many years of occupation.

Anti-Communist Outpost

The change in prospects is, of course, the direct result of the worldwide international tension and the Communist triumph in China. It is now plain that Japan offers the only hope in sight of creating a secure American outpost in the Far Pacific. American plans are being made accordingly.

So are the plans of the Japanese reactionaries, who are all set to negotiate with Washington on the price to be paid for keeping their country in the American camp. The feudalists and bureaucrats in Japan—who are mentally still living in the atmosphere of Runnymede—are breathing more easily. They know that even a MacArthur cannot create a democratic Japan, and a docile, disciplined Japan at one and the same time.

What is being reborn on the other side of the world is a Japan that obeys orders. And her future will depend, as ever, on who issues the orders!

THE CHERRY-COLOURED CAT

A black cat can be cherry coloured, a broken-down aristocrat a success—it's the way you look at it • *by REGINALD POUND*

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVEN SPURRIER, A.R.A.

"Dearest Roddy," said his old nannie and gently squeezed his hand. It made him feel despicable

THE TELEGRAM HAD been pushed under the door of the Bayswater bed-sitting-room that was now the only address of Major the Hon. Roderick Caryngton-Landfall, D.S.O., M.C., son of the late Lord Landfall of Landfall Hall, Hampshire, and Cairnburnmuir Castle, Caithness.

It had been sent overnight. That in itself suggested urgency. It read: *Mittens sinking asks for you.—Nurse.*

Major Landfall was shaving when it came. He read it with emotion, resumed his shaving while mentally rearranging his not very complicated day, and noticed in the mirror, with slight surprise, that an unannounced tear had made a little red furrow running down to his grey-brown moustache.

Poor old Mittens!

She had been the family nannie and he had no childhood memory in which she did not figure. She had assisted vastly in bringing them all up: his eldest brother, the heir, killed at Beaumont Hamel in the first great war; the brother who, succeeding him, had long been domiciled in Kenya; their sister, dead; himself, the youngest and old Mittens's favourite.

She had been with the family fifty-four years and was the subject of a tribute in the personal column of *The Times* newspaper on her seventieth birthday. She had given unstintingly of her devotion. They had been devoted to her in return.

To Major Landfall she represented those wonderful years when fortune approved of him and everything that he did, when he was young and gay and when gladness, it seemed, was always in his heart. Contrasted with his closed-in, frustrated life now, those years were like another incarnation or a dream. He found it hard to believe that his present impoverishment was part of the same pattern and process of living.

The family wealth, which had once been great and secure, had been drained away by three heavy death duty claims coming in quick succession. An unsatisfactory will, expensively contested, had reduced the Landfall heritage still further.

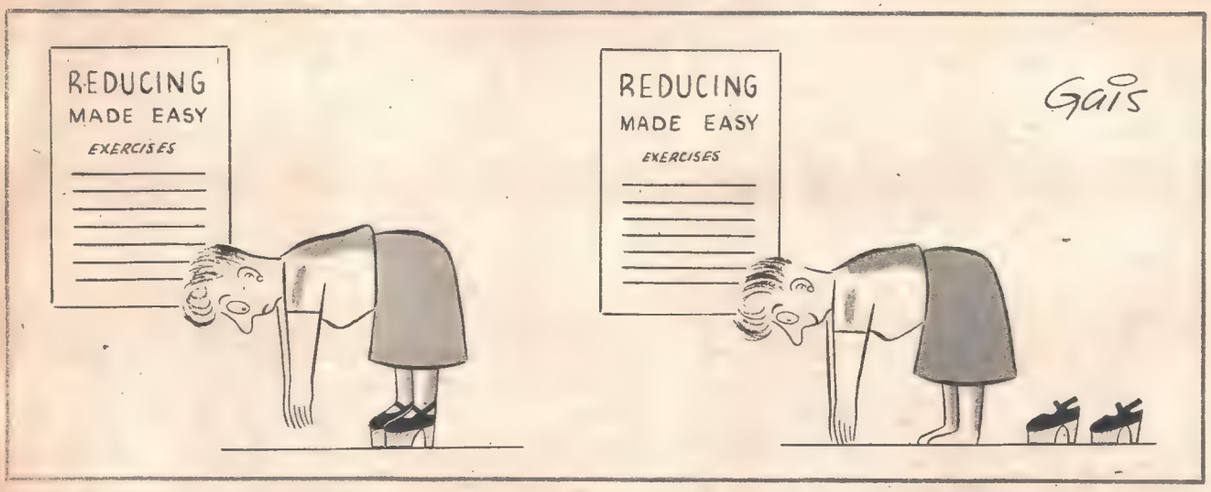
All that was left, apart from one or two outlying annuities, was a timber company formed to exploit the last assets in the woods of Landfall Hall, requisitioned by one of the national boards, and Major Landfall's eight hundred a year.

It was his only income and it was taxable and it was not very much. It meant using up his second World War gratuity and his small savings and, at sixty-two, facing a future of increasing insecurity and dread.

MITTENS would have known of this general decline in the family's fortunes, but it would have been beyond her powers of comprehension, he reflected, to grasp that it could have so profoundly affected his life and happiness.

Thinking of her with surging feelings, he was hurt by the remembrance of her very great patience in these unheeding years. The last time he had seen her was before the war. He knew perfectly well that she would not reproach him by look or word. He knew that when he reproached himself she would say: "Silly chump, you!" in that affectionately scolding way of hers and that he would fancy himself back at Eton and doing his best to accept her dictum about the futility of crying over spilt milk.

He had remembered, faithfully, her birthdays and had always sent her a Christmas letter with a parcel, too. The pension which she had received from the



estate had no doubt been a great help. But, recalling the passing of the years, he was deeply disturbed by regret at not having gone to see her more often.

Even so, Mittens herself did not make it easy for him. She had embarrassing ideas of his place and importance in the world.

She took care to let him know how delighted she was when the papers announced him as a Parliamentary candidate in a by-election which did not, after all, take place. She was even more gratified to learn that he was chairman of the Landfall Estate Development Company, Limited.

It sounded very grand to her and confirmed once again her long-held belief that he was the brainiest of the family. To her he was not only heroic as a soldier but triumphant as a man of affairs.

It was accidental and yet perhaps not wholly incidental that Major Landfall nicked his chin rather badly with his finishing razor strokes. His chin was almost his last buttress against fate.

He stopped the blood with cotton-wool and then he went down to the hall to telephone. He could not afford the luxury of a telephone in his room.

"Tell Mr. Coomber," he said, getting through to the company's office in Cannon Street, "that I'm awfully sorry, but I can't attend the board meeting. I've been called by telegram to the death-bed of a very old friend. He won't believe it," smiling faintly into the telephone, "but he knows what we office boys are—he's been one himself."

He heard the secretary's polite cough and at once deprecated his remark. "That wasn't very kind of me, Miss Saxton, was it? I shouldn't have said it. Say I hope to be back in the office by tomorrow," and, putting down the receiver, he wondered whether he could be.

OLD Mittens had chosen to retire to a cottage in the Dukeries of all places. It was a part of England she had never seen before and was linked in her mind with social splendours of which she could never read or hear too much. She wished to die, she said, in sight of Welbeck. An uncle of hers had been a footman there in the great days.

Major Landfall had climbed sixty-three of the eighty-five stairs that he knew so monotonously well, when the telephone rang out from below. He turned at once and went down again. He knew it was for him. The telephone always rang as peremptorily as that when Coomber was on the line. He was that kind of managing director.

"Major? Coomber here. I say, you can't cut today's board meeting. Impossible! We want your signature to those documents. We've got the Ministry of Works contract coming up. It's important; don't you *know* it's important?"

Major Landfall did not like Mr. Coomber. They were temperamentally opposed. He recognized the fellow's abilities and disliked, intensely, his manners. Alec Coomber, who had been an estate agent's junior clerk and had risen by his own acumen, had a certain regard for the major's family background and more for his social ease, but he made it constantly clear that he had no use for him as a business colleague.

THE sense of disadvantage lay always with Major Landfall. Coomber had one of those quick brains. His power of decision was forceful, his flair for meeting and dissolving problems impressive. It seemed to Major Landfall, sometimes unjustly, that Coomber seldom lost a chance of scoring off him, of underlining his lack of finesse and efficiency.

He answered Coomber's objections on the telephone as calmly as he could. He realized, he said, the importance of the board meeting. Any decision made there, he said, would have his support in principle. As for the documents, they were not so urgent that they could not wait another day or so.

Hearing, at that, signs of acute impatience coming over the line, he said with more firmness than he was usually able to muster for these occasions: "You must understand, Coomber, that I have a duty to do, a duty to a very old friend, and that I'm going to do it."

He wished he could be as decisive in his dealings with the bank manager whose goodwill he would have to evoke before drawing the cheque for ten pounds that his journey would require. He was overdrawn and had promised to keep his cash needs to a minimum until the next quarter's replenishment of his account.

It was not simply a matter of a return railway ticket. He would be obliged to hire some clothes because Mittens thought him a success in life and would be dismayed if he did not appear in what for her had always been the hallmark of it—formal morning dress. Throughout her active years that had been the attire of gentlemen, and of men of affairs, whether they were gentlemen or not.

The bank interview was not an agreeable one. Major Landfall came away from it with ten clean one-pound notes in his wallet and a renewed determination to master the circumstances that so often humiliated him nowadays.

The clothes hire establishment was a couple of streets away. He was not difficult to fit out with morning dress. He had the figure and he had the instinct. He put on the silk hat with practised assurance. He looked completely right in it, standing bravely out of the context of our times.

It gave him confidence and restored some of his old jauntiness of bearing. He would not have cared to run into Coomber, but if that were to occur he felt for once that he would be equal to it.

"Fits you perfectly, sir, if I may say so," he was told in the shop. The tone conveyed not only admiration but regret that occasion for it was rare these days.

Major Landfall took a bus to King's Cross. He did not mind being stared at. It was one of the things that Eton had taught him not to mind.

His third-class ticket for the train, likewise, seemed to surprise one or two of his fellow passengers who had evidently not grasped the facts of the social revolution in our time. They gave him sideways glances suggesting that they were embarrassed or, if not that, puzzled because he did not seem to be in the least.

By the time he reached the Dukeries it was late afternoon, with a rust-red sun going down behind distant hills and woods. He felt cold and cramped and hungry and decided to hire a car to take him the last eight miles, instead of waiting for the local train. He had a fear that he might be too late. It agitated him.

HE was not too late, though the nurse, coming out to the car at the gate, said that old Mittens was much weaker and not likely to last many hours. That was the doctor's opinion as well as hers.

Lying in the soft lamp-light of the tiny raftered bedroom old Mittens looked as if any sudden puff would as readily extinguish her. She seemed to be scarcely breathing.

It was some time before she recognized him fully and when she did she put out a frail hand and held his with a gratitude that he could feel. In her still blue eyes there was great joy. When at last she spoke it was to thank him for coming to see her and for always being so good to her.

It hurt Major Landfall intolerably. He said, huskily, that she must not talk, that it would tire her, that she must rest.

"Yes, dearest Roddy," she said and surrendered to his will with a gentle squeeze of his hand that made him feel despicable.

She slept gently and he sat there watching her in the soft light. Above her pillow on the wall was a photograph of himself in cricket togs at sixteen. There were other family photographs in the room. He could not look at them.

Distracting his thoughts, a young black cat with green eyes came into the room so silently that he did not know it was there until it jumped as silently on to his knee. It settled down in his lap and he sat stroking it. He did not specially care about cats but he was glad of this one's company.

Old Mittens woke almost abruptly. She raised her head a little to stare at him and then sank back, smiling.

"Where was I?" she asked, her voice sounding suddenly normal and strong. "I've dragged you away. You have such a lot of important things to see to. I oughtn't to have worried you like this."

SHE said she hoped he would not mind but she had taken a liberty with his name. She had put him in her will as her executor. She wanted him, and no one else, to look after it for her.

"You see, Roddy, there's the pension from the family. I've never had to touch it. My brother at the farm, he left me a little. It's been enough. Quite enough. The pension's all in the bank. It's all there, isn't it, nurse? How much did they say it comes to now?"

The nurse gave the information to Major Landfall rather than to her patient.

"Just over two thousand pounds. With the interest, that is."

"It mounted up, you see, dearest Roddy. Money does, if you let it."

"She wants it to go to a fund for distressed gentlewomen," the nurse said. "Don't you?" she said, raising her voice. Old Mittens's strength had receded again. She did not hear her.

"She was telling me that *you* know, better than most of us, how hard these times are for ladies from good families who've lost their money. With you gentlemen, she said, it's different. You can look after yourselves, she said."

The cat rose up, curved its back and very deliberately stepped on to the bed.

"No!" said the nurse strictly, and stooped to remove it.

At that old Mittens's attention came back. "Let her be," she said, putting out a hand to the cat. "She's been such a good friend to me, lying here. I want you, dearest Roddy, to take her back with you. She's a dear little cat. It'll be something to remember me by."

"You must rest," said Major Landfall, leaning across to her. "The doctor says it's most important that you don't overdo it," he said, feeling suddenly very tired himself.

"No one'll look after my little cat as you would, dear," she breathed. I—should—die—happy——"

"You can count on me, Mittens," said Major Landfall, hardly trusting himself to speak. "You can count on me," he added anxiously, as he felt a tiny tremor in her hand.

He rose, seeing nothing but the darkness beyond the lamp-light. The nurse looked at him, then bent her ear to old Mittens's face.

"Dear, oh dear," she said. "I must get the hand mirror."

There was a midnight train that Major

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THE HUMAN MACHINE

Climb Down!

PEOPLE are so unreasonable! Everyone pushes his own point of view, convinced not only that he is right, but so obviously right that any contrary view is inadmissible.

Few willingly listen to anyone else's ideas. "Compromise" is a word that has come to imply weakness.

Yet it is clear, at any rate to me, that to try to meet people on common ground is the essence of mental and spiritual strength. No one can produce an effective compromise who is not intellectually strong and honest.

We are all human. Therefore we are all fallible. Therefore the other fellow may sometimes be right. Therefore we may sometimes be wrong.

A simple proposition—but it goes deep.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

Nourse batting against England. He's among South Africa's veterans who spanned gulf between Saturday knock-ups and Test cricket in one stride

TEST CRICKET—IF WORK PERMITS

by JOHN ARLOTT

In South Africa, cricket is all-amateur. That's a fact to note when following the fortunes of our side there

JOHANNESBURG.

EVEN WHEN THE SCORES you read about from South Africa seem incredible, I imagine there is still a tendency in England to underestimate the cricket played here—a tendency which springs largely from failure to appreciate the background.

Nourse's South African team of 1948-49 needs to be judged with reference to this factor: Any South African Test team of any period is composed entirely of amateurs—who are essentially Saturday afternoon and Sunday players. There *is* a South African domestic cricket competition, the Currie Cup, but this tournament is suspended when an English side is touring the Union. Even when the Cup is competed for many of the leading players have to miss some of the matches to attend to their work.

When the South African eleven took the field in the first Test of this series no man had played more than two three-day games in the season. In fact, when Norman Mann went on to bowl—and he was South Africa's bowling success of the match—his season's cricket consisted of one three-day and one one-day match! On the other hand, in the English side, Godfrey Evans—counting his Australian and West Indies tours—had barely stopped playing cricket since May, 1946.

It is amazing that these South African players can step straight from the relatively small city leagues—confined to single cities because of the great distances between them—and at once assume Test Match stature.

Players to Remember

Although they have produced few great record breakers, the South Africans have invariably developed great cricketing characters. Jock Cameron, Herby Taylor, Buster Nupen, the Nourses, Mitchell, Langton—these have been memorable cricketers, although they played the game only in brief intervals of stockbroking, farming or business.

The South African eleven which faced Walter Hammond's team in 1938-39 was a magnificent cricketing combination, carefully blended and vetted—with, so it seemed, its greatest feats still ahead of it. War not only took the best years from these players, but also prevented the development of young players to fill the gaps in the peak eleven.

So, now South African Test cricket is in a state of flux. That is a special background to this particular Springbok side.

South Africa's eleven falls into three sections—the remnants of the old team, younger players already of Test stature, and promising players still on trial. The form for such a team is unpredictable. At any time one of the veterans may play up to his old standards of greatness or one of the youngsters give proof of his own ripeness. On the other hand, the eleven is not yet a *blend*—and must face the future with considerable uncertainty.

Haven't Long to Go

The old guard are still the backbone of the batting, for batsmen invariably last longer than bowlers, particularly in a country of plumb batsmen's wickets. Nourse, Melville, Eric Rowan, Bruce Mitchell and Billy Wade still bear the main burden of the innings. Yet, with the exception of Wade, all of them must be too old for Test cricket within two or three years. The connoisseur of cricket will relish them before they go, for they are characters in their own right, each separate and distinct as cricketer and as man.

They have risen straight from the ruck of the many Saturday afternoon games and proved themselves fit to stand with the most experienced of professional cricketers.

Dudley Nourse, who followed his equally famous father, Dave Nourse, into the South African Test team, was an outstanding figure in England in 1947. Grimly square, a belligerent batsman, he plays fast bowling incredibly late and moves with a speed which belies his bulk to murder spin bowling with forearm drives reminiscent of Maurice Leyland. Nourse is the man for a side in a corner and a captain to get the best out of his players.

The earlier captain, Alan Melville, is Nourse's physical opposite; slim and elegant, he captained Oxford University and Sussex before he returned to his native South Africa. Melville is as obviously a product of English university cricket as Nourse is of the fierce competition of the South African city parks.

Unlike Melville's, most of Bruce Mitchell's great innings have been slow, defensive masterpieces, calmly worked out to save his side from collapse. Never was there such economy of cricket motion as in the batting of this tall, lean, dry, quiet man who plays with an air of one withdrawn from the match.

The third Transvaal batsman, Eric Rowan, is the *enfant terrible* of South African cricket. The second and third Tests of this series were to be played with an interval of only one day but almost a thousand miles. So the side for the third Test was picked while the second was still in progress. Eric Rowan, justifiably on his form until then, was dropped.

It seems incredible that the South African selectors did not know their Rowan better. Of course he proceeded to make a century—easily his highest score in Test cricket—in the second innings of the second Test, immediately after he had been dropped. It was a century well salted with asides to the players on the field and the officials off it.

Later he gave a party to celebrate the finest joke even he had ever perpetrated on cricketers—and then fell asleep half way through the party from the sheer exhaustion of eight hours of fierce batting concentration.

Only Keith Miller and Don Bradman beside Eric Rowan might be expected to play such an innings in such circumstances.

The Wizards of Spin

Of the younger men, Athol Rowan and Norman Mann are probably the finest pair of natural spin bowlers in the world today. Together, although the wickets in their own country are all against them, they practically carry the team's bowling and, even on the most plumb of wickets, are almost unhittable. They will bowl by the hour in terrific heat, varying spin, pace, flight and length and never, it seems, bowling a bad ball.

The two chief players of the future for South Africa are McCarthy and Wynne. Owen Wynne is modelled on Bruce Mitchell, whose place he is obviously intended to take. There is much of the same economy of movement, inclination to back-play and calmness about his play, as about Mitchell's. Even after four consecutive Test failures he *had* to be picked again because he is the only young batsman of clear Test promise in all South African cricket.

Cuan McCarthy, called, of course, "Charlie," is a tall nineteen-year-old student at Pietermaritzburg; he's South Africa's fast bowling hope. He has a slingy action and less speed than Miller or Lindwall, but he has some years in which to gain experience in the exploitation of wickets and the ways of batsmen, and he has the enthusiasm to learn. He is probably as fast as any bowler in England today and, as he fills out physically, his pace should increase.

Strangely, in a country of batsmen's wickets, there are more young bowlers than batsmen of promise. Hanley is not so good an off-break bowler as Athol Rowan but he spins viciously.

Snag in the System

Meanwhile, South Africans enjoy the game and trust to the gusto of their Saturday afternoons and the independence of their cricket to produce more Test greatness from the one-day matches of a few cities.

Yet those very points provide a snag.

Surrey cricket followers will remember Douglas Ovenstone wicket-keeping for South Africa against Surrey in 1947 and having one of the most spectacular days out ever seen, even at the Oval. He missed many matches of the tour through a broken finger but he left English critics with the impression that here was another of South Africa's great natural cricketers.

Well, last month Douglas Ovenstone sailed for St. Helena to organize fishing there—without having played cricket once this season. Now it seems he is lost to the game.

Always cutting across the development of cricket greatness there comes that curious South African factor arising out of the workaday interests of pure amateurs in a part of the world where the spaces are great and open, indeed.

GREEN GROW THE RUSHES

A THREE-MAN COMMISSION, sent by the Ministry of Agriculture to investigate the low yield of farmers in the Liberty of Anderida Marsh, becomes aware of some conspiracy.

Prudhoe, one of the officials, rightly suspects smuggling, in which Hammond, ex-wartime sailor, with Colonel Gill and many other Anderida officials, is actively engaged.

Meg Cuffley, nineteen-year-old daughter of the editor of the *Anderida Post*, too, guesses what is going on, and by following Hammond to the vaults where the liquor is stored, she is at last let into the secret—and falls in love with Hammond.

Hammond falls for her, too, but realizes ruefully that smuggling is getting too dangerous and that he must soon leave Anderida. He decides to run just one more consignment of liquor.

Then, during a storm, Captain Biddle, Hammond's right-hand man, runs the trawler *Frolic* aground into Farmer Bainbridge's duckpond—the same irate Bainbridge who hates trespassers and who has already pitchforked the Ministry officials from his farm. And the *Frolic* still has its cargo of contraband.

Biddle discovers that Bainbridge's supposed wife, Polly, is really his own wife, who ran away years before, and tries to blackmail Bainbridge to help him get the ship afloat.

Prudhoe, however, is determined to board the *Frolic*, and when Constable Pettigrew asks him why, declares: "Because I have good reason to believe the ship to be carrying contraband!"

FINAL INSTALMENT

Fishy Business

FOR the space of fully half a minute there was a deathly silence. Nobody spoke, nobody moved.

"Good morning!"

They turned towards the cheery voice. Colonel Gill, his leg creaking rhythmically, limped down the slope towards the group beneath the bows of the ship. He waved a scrap of paper in his hand.

"This what you're looking for, Prudhoe?" He smiled and put the document into Prudhoe's hand. "It's a warrant to search . . . has to be signed by a J.P., you know." He smiled charmingly and waved him towards the ladder against the beam. "Go ahead, go ahead."

Prudhoe took the paper. He was surprised; but he understood. Colonel Gill was no fool, he had always known that. Nevertheless, he doubted whether the gesture would avail Gill much; he had left it rather too late.

He mounted the ladder to the deck and Pettigrew followed him. Rupert Hammond and Biddle were waiting at the head of the ladder.

"Well, shall we have a look at the engine-room first?" Prudhoe suggested, for no reason other than a natural desire to leave the best till the last. He followed Hammond down into the little engine-room. It was empty of all but the silent engine. They went up again to the deck.

"The cabin?" Prudhoe said. "The galley?"

They went down the companion-way into the cabin. Prudhoe was reluctant to peer under the bunk and elsewhere; in any case he knew that what he sought would not be there; but Hammond did so, lifting the lid of the sea-chests, poking into the cupboards, prodding the cushions. They went into the little galley; it was no less innocent than the engine-room and the cabin had been. They returned to the deck.

"And now," said Prudhoe, "shall we have a look at the hold?"

He smiled from one to the other of the faces about him. There was a moment's silence. Then Biddle moved towards the hatch.

"In here?" he said.

Prudhoe nodded. "Please."

Biddle shot the bolts and threw back the panel. Prudhoe approached and peered into the yawning hole. The colour drained slowly from his face, for the boxes, open, stacked side by side and one upon the other almost to the level of the deck itself, were full of fish.

Nobody moved. Hammond watched him. He could see it on the man's lips to say: "What is in the boxes beneath?" so he motioned to Biddle:

"Captain Biddle, show Mr. Prudhoe the boxes beneath, will you?"

Biddle lifted the uppermost crate; under it there was another tray of fish.

Prudhoe did not raise his eyes. Hammond waited; it seemed a very long time. Then he knew he had won. "Would you care to see all of them?" he asked.

Prudhoe shook his head abruptly. "No." The word was hardly audible.

"No trouble at all," Hammond said. "Captain Biddle, would you be so good?"

"No!" said Prudhoe sharply. He turned on his heel and went to the rail and left the ship.

Rupert followed him slowly and stood with his elbows on the rail. Pettigrew, without a word, followed Prudhoe to the ground. Biddle came to the rail at Hammond's side. They watched him go up the slope towards Finch and Colonel Gill and Polly.

And then the cattle stampeded.

It was a scene Rupert never forgot—a spectacle so astonishing, so unexpected, so wildly, deliriously out of context that for a moment he could not believe his own eyes and turned instinctively to Biddle who also was visibly taken aback.

HAVING now drunk their fill at the point where the stream joined the pond, the five cows had turned to gaze at the men beneath the bows of the ship. Water streamed from their quivering nostrils. For a moment all five stood unsteadily and eyed the group of officials. Then one of the youngest threw back her head, uttered a slightly hysterical bray, kicked up her heels and, with tail high in the air, charged.

The rest followed her.

Urquhart, the Coastguard, was the first to notice the thunder of hooves at his back. He turned, let out a muffled cry of warning, and ran. Rigby, the bailiff's sergeant, shrank against the bows of the ship; Hewitt, the Customs Officer, sidestepped but took the force of a glancing blow in the chest and fell heavily, while Pettigrew, who had remained among them after leaving the ship, tried to leap the stream, failed to reach the opposite bank, and went sprawling in the nettles.

As he sat up, badly stung and winded, he saw that the animals were making direct for Finch, Fisherwick, Prudhoe, Colonel Gill and Polly Bainbridge who, all unconscious, were arguing bitterly a few yards up the slope.

The most agile of the three youngest animals took Finch squarely in the small of the back and he pitched face down into the grass. Prudhoe failed to avoid a lurching rump and stretched his length among the pounding hoofs. Fisherwick stepped aside. Colonel Gill and Polly stood their ground and hit out with their sticks, but with little effect.

Then it was over. The creature which had brought down the unhappy Finch returned to stand over him and nudge him playfully with her soft snout; the rest made off and, after a lighthearted cavort among themselves, came presently to a standstill, the elders from exhaustion, the younger beasts for no better reason than that the frenzy had apparently passed.

POLLY drove off Finch's persecutor, which joined her companions with the utmost docility. One of the older beasts was now atrociously sick; the second stood swaying and blinking stupidly into the sun; one of the younger sank into a sitting position and began to bray mournfully; the other two nuzzled the turf.

Polly and Colonel Gill helped Finch to his feet.

"My glasses," he groaned.

They retrieved his pince-nez from the grass, and then his hat and umbrella.

"Never in all my born days——" Pettigrew gasped as he lumbered towards them. "Never——" His rubicund face was mottled with nettle-stings. "Those beasts will have to be put away."

"Rubbish!" cried Polly. "High-spirited, that's all they are——"

"There's something the matter with those cows," said Prudhoe narrowly. He looked towards the now placid little herd. "Cows don't behave like that."

"I want a comprehensive report on those animals!" Finch barked. He turned on Prudhoe. "I hold you entirely responsible for this, Prudhoe," he said. "I hope you're satisfied. Every time I come near this farm, something happens."

"It might be something in the water;" Fisherwick said. He looked towards the duckpond.

"Then test it," Finch snapped. "Do something!" He breathed hard through his nose. "Take a specimen of that pondwater, Prudhoe, get it analysed."

He nodded briefly and left the harbour.

Prudhoe spoke: "I must ask you for the loan of an empty bottle, Mrs. Bainbridge."

"Better get the cattle into the shed," Colonel Gill said quietly.

They spread out and began to drive the cows up the incline to the shed on the bank; Prudhoe followed Polly into the cottage. Hammond ran down the slope to the ship.

He stood under the bows. "Where is Sigismund?"

Biddle started. "Where's the engineer?" he asked of the mate.

"'Ow do I know?" said Fred Starling, somewhat aggrieved. "Ee's gone off on 'is own somewhere. You know what Siggy is. . . ."

A single duck teetered from beneath the keel of the ship and endeavoured to clamber up the bank; it slipped and rolled back into the nettles, protesting feebly. Fascinated, Hammond watched it for a moment. Then he jumped into the bed of the stream and peered into the green gloom beneath the hull.

Three or four ducks floundered among the nettles; two at least were incapable of movement. The rest were gathered about the end of a length of hosepipe which, reaching almost to the surface of the running water, served for draining the bilge. Even as he saw the hose it moved, kicked a little and released a stream of sparkling golden liquid which flowed with the water down through the nettles to the duckpond beyond.

"Dear mother!" he whispered.

He rose and made for the ladder against the beam. In the corner of his eye he saw Prudhoe, now swinging down the slope towards the pond with an empty bottle in his hand. He ignored Biddle's hoarse questions and dived for the engine-room. In the floor of the little compartment there was a trap-door; beneath lay the bilge.

He wrenched at the ring and threw up the trap. In the foetid darkness there was a sudden agitated muttering and then silence. He lowered himself into the hole and, crouching low, saw the tell-tale litter of broken boxes and empty bottles. There were two figures beyond, stooping over the bung.

"Sigismund!" he said sharply.

And then in a whisper: "Meg!"

COLONEL GILL asked: "Why did the girl do it?" But the question was rhetorical, and required no answer. "How much had they emptied into the stream?" he asked.

"Three or four cases."

"You're certain Prudhoe took a sample?"

"The chemist has it now."

They fell silent again.

"You know," Colonel Gill said wearily, "there is one monumental fact staring me in the face the whole time—has been from the moment the business began . . . what do you do with liquor? You drink it." He got to his feet and for the twentieth time that afternoon stumped to the window. "You drink it," he said again, "drink it. How many cases are there left?"

"Getting on for sixty-five."

"Sixty-five." He made a rapid calculation. "That's roughly 700 bottles . . . say a bottle a day among a dozen men . . . sixty days, more or less. Sixty days . . . and we have a few hours."

"To put away 700 bottles in the space of two or three hours," Rupert said, "we'd need something like a thousand men. And a field ambulance," he added.

"A thousand men," Colonel Gill said. "Half the male population——"

"We couldn't do it anyway," Hammond reminded him, "with a bunch of officials sitting under the bows."

"And tomorrow I'm busy," Colonel Gill muttered. "It's Charter Day."

"What does that involve?" Hammond asked without any great show of interest.

He looked up and caught Colonel Gill's eyes on him. They were shining with a peculiar glint. "Charter Day!" said the colonel. "Charter Day, dammit! Why didn't I think of it before?"

THE commemoration of Charter Day in the Liberty is an occasion to which the marshmen look forward throughout the year.

Ostensibly it marks the opening of the petty sessions, at which the newly elected magistrates dispense justice to such transgressors as Constable Pettigrew is able to muster for the occasion. But centuries of tradition have made it a fête day, with a ritual peculiarly its own.

This year there was, to begin with, a

Seven hundred bottles of smuggled brandy, and less than three hours to dispose of it! To Hammond the problem seemed insoluble

by HOWARD CLEWES

procession. It was led by a troop of Boy Scouts.

Behind them marched the Portenoy Fire Brigade which, with helmets glittering bravely in the sun and axes swinging from their belts, lent a touch of splendour to the leading files. Next in order was the Anderida Brass Band.

Then, suitably escorted, came the climax of the whole procession. Mounted on a large horse, crowned, bearded, robed in purple and preceded by two pages carrying between them a symbolic scroll of parchment, rode Edward IV, a long white quill pen poised for use in his right hand; prolonged cheering followed him the length of the High Street.

For the rest, there were the Justices of the Peace—they would leave the procession as it wound past the wharf, and deal summarily with the legal business of the afternoon—next, the glee-singers, who would later render a few songs for the entertainment of the people; the children, with the maypole they would erect beneath the elms on the green, and finally, the chairman, the bailiff, the lords, jurats and commonalty of the Liberty. Hundreds strong, laughing and chattering, hugging their packets of sandwiches, they strung out along the road behind the main body.

STANDING on the sidewalk outside the pharmacy, Prudhoe watched the procession flow past him. The chemist's analysis of the pondwater was in his pocket; he felt the little envelope beneath his hand. Presently he walked back to the inn.

Finch and Fisherwick were watching the *cortège* from the window of the parlour. They turned as Prudhoe entered.

"Charter Day!" Finch exploded. "Have you seen this preposterous procession?"

Prudhoe nodded.

"I've got the analysis of that pondwater," he said. He opened the envelope and laid the paper on the table.

Finch picked it up and frowned at it.

"Alcohol?" he said.

"Yes," said Prudhoe.

"And you think it was drained out of the ship in some way?"

"I do."

"It might have come from anywhere," Fisherwick said.

Prudhoe shrugged his shoulders. "That's the analysis of the water which poisoned those cows," he said.

"If this can be proved," Finch began, "if smuggling can be—— "

"We have only to examine the wreck," Prudhoe said.

Finch nodded. "Gentlemen," he said, "we will go down to the harbour at once. This time we shall not be gulled."

When they arrived on the embankment above the trawler, Finch stopped. He said: "We should have the police here." The rooks called hoarsely in the elms beyond the tower of St. John's, and wisps of brazen music flowed about the roofs of the town. "There may have to be arrests."

"Almost certainly so," said Prudhoe. "If we can take them red-handed. Plainly most of the male population is engaged in smuggling."

"Fisherwick," Finch said, "be so good as to fetch Pettigrew, will you?"

But Constable Pettigrew was neither at home, nor, it appeared, in the vicinity of the green. He was, in fact, in the parlour of the cottage on the slopes above the meadow, talking to Joseph Bainbridge.

"Today being Charter Day," Pettigrew was saying, "and in consequence

ILLUSTRATED BY STANLEY HERBERT

Pausing for a brief while they watched Edward the King floating to and fro above the deck. Feverishly opening bottles, they had lost count of time

the opening of the petty sessions of the marsh, it would be possible to take action in the matter of the trespass, if it is still so desired."

Bainbridge swallowed and sank on to the chair.

"It's a matter of an Information, which you have to lay before the police," Pettigrew explained. He eased his great body an inch or two forward on the chair. "Assuming your desire to proceed against the alleged trespassers, and the Justices now being seated, it has been thought fit to prepare the necessary summonses. . . ." He felt for the documents in the tail of his tunic. "So it remains for you to decide whether you, as the party trespassed, want to pursue the matter to the utmost of the law. . . ."

He watched the slow, malicious grin break across the man's mouth.

On the bank above the cottage, Finch and Prudhoe waited for Fisherwick to return with the policeman. They waited some ten minutes. And then Finch, growing impatient, said:

"Let us go down, Prudhoe. While we're waiting, we may as well deal with these officials."

Together they descended the bank. Rigby, the bailiff's sergeant, Urquhart, the coastguard, and Hewitt, the customs officer from Rye, unshaven, dishevelled, but no less determined than ever, rose warily to face them.

A few moments later Pettigrew appeared in the doorway of the cottage and bore down on the group of men beneath the bows of the ship.

"Good afternoon, Constable," Finch said briskly. "Some very interesting evidence has come to light in respect of yesterday's fiasco. In fact, I think we have found the root of the mischief——"

Pettigrew said: "Have you? Well, I'm afraid we'll have to attend to that after, sir."

Finch blinked rapidly. "After what? This is a matter of the utmost importance, Constable——"

"It's my duty, sir," said Pettigrew immovably, "to inform you, and all of these gentlemen here, that a charge of trespass has been brought against you. All of you, including Mr. Hewitt, Mr. Rigby and Mr. Urquhart."

For a moment there was silence.

Then Finch said faintly: "Trespass?"

"That's correct, sir," said Pettigrew. "This is private property, this meadow." He fumbled in the tail of his tunic. "The summonses are all in order." He produced the documents. "It's just a matter of serving——" He licked his thumb and began to distribute them, calling the names. "Mr. Finch, Mr. Fisherwick——"

"He's gone to look for you," Prudhoe said.

"Very good, sir." He continued: "Mr. Rigby, Mr. Urquhart, Mr. Hewitt. Now if you'll all kindly come along with me, nice and orderly, the Justices has sat and the matter can be dealt with as laid down by law."

Prudhoe was the first of the group to speak. "Whose idea is this?" he said softly.

"Idea, sir?" said Pettigrew. "I don't see what that's got to do with it, sir, if I may say so. Ideas is ideas and the law's the law, sir, as we all know."

Finch began: "As chairman of an agricultural commission," he said quietly, "I cannot be held to book for trespass on land under investigation." His voice rose, trembling. "As servants of His Majesty's Government, neither I nor my colleagues recognize the right of this corporation to summons me or them on any account whatsoever." He kept a tight hold on himself. "Let us consider the matter the grotesque mistake it clearly is, and forget it."

Pettigrew shook his head. "No, sir," he said kindly. "I'm afraid you'll have to come along with me. The law's the law."

Finch passed a hand over his eyes. "That wreck," he said, "is full of smuggled spirits . . ." his voice soared, "and you fiddle with trespass!"

"Everything in its proper place, sir," said Pettigrew imperturbably. "One thing at a time. It'll all be dealt with in due course." He raised his arms in a generous embrace and began to shepherd them towards the embankment. "Now come along, come along there, nice and orderly."

"Never in my life," said Finch. His voice rose to the edge of hysteria. "Never, never——"

"Nice and orderly."

Protesting furiously, they moved towards the slope and the embankment.

"Somebody will pay for this, Prudhoe," said Finch bitterly. "Somebody will pay very dearly——" He saw Fisherwick coming down the lane towards them.

"Can't find the copper anywhere," he reported amiably. He stopped short. "Hallo, something wrong?"

"We're under arrest, Fisherwick," said Finch with perhaps pardonable exaggeration, and added venomously: "And so are you."

"So far, so good," murmured Colonel Gill. From a distance they watched Pettigrew drive his victims into the gloomy porch of the wharf. "Let's hope to God the Justices spin it out!" He turned to Whitley: "George, start them moving, will you?" Whitley nodded and went off towards the green and the distant music. "We'll get down to the ship, Rupert. . . ."

They hastened down the lane to the embankment. The harbour was quiet and but for the ship itself, deserted.

"Damn!" Colonel Gill stopped short. "I clean forgot my leg. How the devil am I going to get up that ladder?"

Rupert grinned. "Wait here," he said. He ran up the ladder to the deck. Fred Starling's red hair dawned in the black square of the companion-way; beneath him were the engineer and Alfred Gosling. "All clear," Hammond said. "Stand to the windlass."

They lowered the cable and hook over the beam. "Can you hang on to that?" Hammond cried to Colonel Gill.

The windlass creaked and rattled and Colonel Gill revolved slowly in the air. In a moment he was deposited on the deck, grinning delightedly.

"Throw open the hatches," Hammond told the mate, "and start breaking open the cases."

They opened the hatches and began to break into the cases of liquor. Sigismund climbed down into the hold to pass them up to the men on deck. As soon as the work was under way, Rupert Hammond joined Colonel Gill in the bows.

"How long have we?" he asked him.

"With luck, with a lot of luck—an hour and a half."

"We'll never do it. It will need three hours at least."

"Not even our Justices can spin a case of trespass for three hours, Rupert; rather put your trust in the men of the marsh."

On the green beneath the elms the celebration of Charter Day proceeded with all the gaiety associated with English communal recreation. The happy throng, now numbering some seventeen or eighteen hundred people, flowed about the platform upon which was re-enacted the signing of the Charter of the Liberty.

After he had signed, with his quill pen, Edward IV himself, golden-crowned, red-bearded, purple-trained, descended and, pausing here and there to fondle a childish head, mingled with the people.

The afternoon had truly begun.

Presently the maypole dance began. It attracted much attention, brought a nostalgic tear to more than one senile eye, and moreover, as Edward the King observed to the bailiff, it kept the little brats out of the way.

For it had devolved upon Edward, the bailiff and a few others to disseminate, upon George Whitley's signal, the news that all was ready in the harbour.

As soon as he saw the signal he began to elbow his way through the multitude, touching an arm here, catching an eye there, passing on the word to the bailiff.

They began to move. One by one, in twos or in threes, from here and there on the teeming green they broke away and stole along the deserted High Street to the head of the lane which ran down to the harbour.

Colonel Gill, in the bows of the ship, started. "Here they come!"

Hammond said: "At last!" and ran back to the hatch. "Get some of those bottles uncorked," he cried. Fred Starling and the deck-hand began to wrench at the corks.

As the first two men reached the ladder against the beam, another appeared at the end of the lane above the bank. Then there were two or three together; then six or seven one after the other, plunging down the slope to run across the green meadow and clamber up the ladder to the deck. Thereafter the stream of auxiliaries did not cease.

Fred Starling thrust a bottle of brandy into the hand of the first man to reach the deck.

"Drink that, chum," he said.

In three minutes there were a dozen men on the deck, gathered about the hatch, drinking steadily. Now and then they joked a little, but not often; it was a grim, silent business. The ladder groaned under the weight of those for whom there was no room on deck; a queue had formed beneath the bows; a stream of running figures flowed steadily from the embankment.

"Brotherhood," said Colonel Gill, "is a very live conception in the marsh."

But Hammond was not easy in his mind. For it was not at all a part of the plan that the volunteers should get so drunk as to be incapable of leaving the ship once they were aboard.

"The trouble is," said Colonel Gill, "that the chaps on the ladder waiting won't get off to let the other fellows down. What we really need is another ladder, against the port beam, but it might take twenty minues to find it." He looked across the deck. "What about that affair you hoisted me aboard with? If it works coming up, surely it'll work just as well going down?"

"The windlass?"

"Why not?"

"They'd fall off." Hammond said.

"Tie the beggars on, then."

"Well, we can try it. . . ."

He pushed his way through the throng and summoned the mate, Alfred Gosling and the engineer to the rail. Briefly he explained the difficulty. Then he gave instructions.

"Sigismund, you'd better go over the side first and get ready to untie them. Alfred, you'd better man the windlass. Fred, you rope them to the cable. I'll get them somehow within range. As soon as you get the signal, hoist. Got it?"

They nodded. Fred Starling and Gosling went forward.

Hammond himself took over the uncorking and distribution of the bottles. Presently he heard the squeal of the windlass and saw Sigismund revolving slowly on the cable as he dropped out of sight beneath the port beam. Alfred swung the crank and the cable and hook rose again; now it hung a few feet above the heads of the tightly packed men who, rocking but obstinate, had no eyes but for the bottles in their hands. With rope behind his back Fred moved guilelessly among the tipplers.

As soon as one raised a bottle to his lips the mate slipped the noose over his head and shoulders, signalled to Alfred, and snatched the bottle from the man's hands as he was hoisted suddenly into the air. For a moment he swung like a pendulum over the ship, and then was lowered swiftly out of sight beneath the port beam, the windlass rattling furiously.

Under the port bow Sigismund did his best to dispose as tidily as might be the men he released from the hook.

The chairman of the Justices, who was an old man with beady black eyes and a long neck, took his place; his two colleagues seated themselves on his right and on his left.

The Clerk to the Justices, whose desk in the well of the court occupied the space immediately below the parapet of the Bench, nodded to Constable Pettigrew to usher in the defendants.

Finch stopped in the doorway and looked round the courtroom. "Who's in charge here?" he demanded.

The chairman rapped on his desk. "Order!" he said sharply.

White to the lips, Finch suffered himself to be shepherded with the rest into the dock. He took a tight grip of himself.

Constable Pettigrew took up his position at the door to the corridor. The clerk rose. His face was round and pale; his chin deep blue.

"May it please the court," he murmured. And then, clearing his throat mellifluously: "A case of trespass. . . ."

Finch cried "Before this farce is proceeded with I have something to say——"

"Who is that fellow?" the chair-

OH, JOHNNY! by TIM

man asked irritably. One of his colleagues leaned over and whispered in his ear.

"Finch? Finch?" He peered at the figure in the dock. "I'm surprised to see you here, Finch," he said. "A man of your position. . . ." He looked at the others. "And the others?"

Fisherwick, Prudhoe, Rigby, Urquhart and Hewitt all spoke at once. For a moment all was confusion. The chairman rapped on the desk.

"Now then, now then!" said Pettigrew. Order was presently restored.

"This is a court of law," the chairman told them. "Conduct yourselves accordingly. What is the charge?"

The clerk rose to his feet. "Trespass," he said.

"Trespass?" muttered the chairman. He turned again to the clerk. "Who brings it?"

"May I be permitted to speak now?" Finch said.

"Certainly not," said the chairman.

WHEN the clerk had read the charge, all the defendants but Finch were allowed to seat themselves. The clerk addressed Finch.

"You have heard the charge," he said. "Do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

"This is utterly preposterous!" Finch exploded.

"What is your plea?" said the chairman with some asperity.

"I am a Government official," said Finch. "I——"

"Statements in mitigation," the chairman said, "will be heard after the finding. Now confine yourself to answering the question."

"Not guilty," said Finch at last.

The plea was recorded. One by one the defendants were called to the dock. All returned a plea of not guilty. Joseph Bainbridge was called and questioned; Constable Pettigrew gave evidence. The Bench bickered with the clerk, the clerk with the Bench. The afternoon wore on. Then the Justices retired to consider.

They were still considering an hour and a half later. Pettigrew walked to and fro. Finch watched him malevolently.

"How much longer is this farce going on?" he demanded.

"The Justices has to consider," Pettigrew said immovably.

"I insist on knowing how much longer I am to be kept here like a common thief!"

Pettigrew ignored him.

A few minutes later the door opened and the clerk entered the courtroom.

"Rise up," said Bettigrew. He motioned the defendants to their feet and herded them into the dock.

The Justices entered and took their places.

The chairman cleared his throat and began to speak:

"The Bench has given considerable time to this case," he said, "since it would appear to be without precedent in the records of this court. However," he continued, warming to his notes, "the laws relating to private property are sufficiently well known; there can be no excuse for disregarding them." He peered over the parapet.

"On the other hand, there may be extenuating circumstances, as indeed the defendants pleaded, to wit, necessity—the requirements of an official investigation in the case of three of the defendants, and of the pursuit of duty in the case of the other three. Now the Bench, after a consideration of the evidence, has decided to take the most lenient possible view in the circumstances, to wit, that you are all guilty of a lamentable breach of good manners, and no more than that. We are allowing you the benefit of the doubt. You are therefore discharged. . . ."

The six officials turned towards the door and began to file out of the courtroom.

"But——" said the chairman.

"Hold it," said Pettigrew, "hold it." Sheepishly the six shuffled back into the dock.

"But," said the chairman, "having regard to your continued duties in this same connection, it may be that you will again find yourselves in this court on similar charges. I will explain the matter to the owner of the land, so that you may continue your duties there without let or hindrance."

"Thank you," said Finch, with biting irony.

They turned again to leave the court.

"Furthermore——"

"Easy does it," Pettigrew said. He motioned them back into the dock.

"FURTHERMORE," said the chairman, "and to obviate the possibility of the issue of another summons, the Bench is prepared to issue you all with certificates of *autrefois acquit* under the Offences Against the Persons Act of 1861, which will act as a bar to any subsequent proceedings upon the same facts." He craned his long neck over the parapet. "Kindly make out six certificates of *autrefois acquit*," he told the clerk.

There was a silence. The chairman folded his hands on the desk and smiled at the group of men in the dock. "While that is being done," he said, "the Bench would like to take this opportunity of complimenting Constable Pettigrew upon his exemplary devotion to duty, his tact, his zeal, and above all his complete understanding of his duties."

Pettigrew acknowledged the tribute with a graceful inclination of the head.

The chairman peered over the parapet.

"How long are you going to be with those certificates?" he asked.

"God knows," said the clerk.

On the *Frolic*, the ranks of the unbroken cases diminished. There was no noise, no confusion. If a man raised his voice or appeared full, the mate marked him down, stalked him, slipped the noose over his head and shoulders; he was hoiked from the deck, too astonished or too tightly held by the rope to protest, and dropped beneath the port bow.

RUPERT HAMMOND had lost count of time. He wrenched at the obstinate corks and occasionally ran a hand over his brow, too intent, too worried now to be amused by the little antics of the mate and his unhappy victims.

"What d'you propose to do with yourself, Rupert," Colonel Gill asked him, "if by the grace of God we get away with this?"

"Sleep," Hammond replied briefly. He straightened his back to watch Edward the King floating to and fro above the deck, his purple robes billowing in the wind.

"And then?"

"I haven't dared to think further than that."

"You'll be a free man, relatively." He smiled. "Yes, I know."

"How would it be if I looked out for a bit of land for you? Not a bad way of investing your profits."

"What about the *Frolic*?"

"She's a dead loss, Rupert."

"Biddle doesn't think so."

"Drawing a bow at a venture," said Colonel Gill, "I'd say that Biddle was a dead loss, too."

"How d'you mean?"

Colonel Gill raised his stick and pointed. Hammond looked towards Bainbridge's cottage. On the sill of a first-floor window, just above the door, there was a bowler hat.

Hammond grinned. "Did you arrange that?"

"Not at all. She's a very sagacious woman, Polly Biddle." He leaned on his stick. "You were talking about the ship, Rupert. Have you spent your winnings?"

"I've never touched them."

"What d'you plan to do with 'em?" He watched the young man with a half smile. "Give 'em to charity?"

"I'd thought about it."

"You'd do better to buy some land and start farming. There's nothing to compare with a bit of digging to clear the conscience. . . . What's up?"

HAMMOND had stiffened, and his gaze had become fixed. On the fringe of the throng he had caught a glimpse, though only in profile, of a diminutive figure in greasy dungarees plainly too large, who wore a beret on his head and was about to raise a bottle to his lips. But there was something strangely familiar in the roundness of the curves, a certain fulness that the overalls could not conceal.

"Just a minute," he muttered.

He pushed his way through the crowd towards the beret. As he approached he saw the mate beyond, making ready the noose.

"Meg!" he shouted.

The rope fell about her waist. He saw Fred Starling's grin of triumph.

"Meg!"

She turned at the voice, struggling with the rope. Hammond reached her side and took the bottle from her hand. He released her. "Meg," he began. "You must be crazy——"

The mate looked at him open-mouthed and not a little mortified. He watched Rupert lead her astern. She staggered slightly and endeavoured to free herself from the encircling arm.

"Le' me go," she said.

"Meg—Meg, why did you come here? Why did you have to get mixed up in this?"

"I feel sick," she said. She swayed against him. "I feel sick," she repeated on a note of growing alarm.

He pushed a way through the jostling men to the stern. "Will you never learn?" he groaned. "Come on."

"I feel awful," she quavered. "Oh, Rupert——"

"Put your arm round my neck . . . hang on." He half carried her into the stern. "Hold on to the rail," he told her. Presently she felt a little better.

"I'm all right now," she said shakily.

"You don't seem too sure."

"Yes, I am." She shivered and hiccoughed. She looked up at him piteously.

"I was helping," she said.

"I'm very touched, Meg."

"You're laughing at me again."

"Anything but," he said.

"Is it going to be all right?"

"I don't know."

"Then you'll be going, won't you?" she said.

"I don't know that, either. I love you."

Her face crumpled suddenly. "And I look such a sight," she said. She began to cry.

Just then Prudhoe reached the bank above the ship. He was followed by Finch and Fisherwick. Hard on their heels came Rigby, Urquhart and Hewitt. And Colonel Gill strolled into the stern of the ship and said to Rupert Hammond:

"The hold seems to be empty."

PORTENOY harbour is sown with potatoes now; it gives two good crops a year. Rupert and Meg work the land themselves. They live in the cottage on the slope.

The *Frolic* is still there. Nettles flourish about her keel; small weeds blossom from her rotting boards, in season. Polly uses the cable as a clothes line. She lives in the ship with her husband. He is to be seen, on five days of each week, the bowler hat clamped firmly to his bullet head, digging a channel which, in a straight line, runs from the wreck to the sea wall.

THE END

"May I introduce Mr. Seert—the television announcer"

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THE CHERRY-COLOURED CAT

Continued from page 16

Landfall could catch. A village cart took him back to the junction. He carried the little black cat, her green eyes shining up at him like glowworms, inside his coat.

In the train the twin green lights went out. Major Landfall slept, too, exhausted by his emotions. He dreamed that he was making a speech before a lot of applauding people. Afterwards they came up and bowed respectfully to him, Coomber among them. Alone among them Coomber put out his hand and Major Landfall was pleased that he did.

He awoke. A louder, more persistent rumbling told him that they were running into the brick and stone and concrete of London and he sat up, prepared for his journey's end.

As he did so there was a sinuous movement inside his coat and the little cat, which he had forgotten, leapt out and ran along the seat to the window.

It was still only half light outside and Major Landfall did not immediately realize that he had a fellow passenger, a workman who had got in while he slept. He wore corduroys and had a shovel and a pick leaning against his knees.

"Wot you got there, then, cock?" the workman asked, and Major Landfall was aware of pleasure at being addressed on equal terms. "A cherry-coloured cat."

Major Landfall smiled agreeably, called the cat to him, and wrestled mentally with the problem of the workman's novel description of it. Cherry-coloured . . . how could it be that? Then he saw the point and laughed, throwing his head back.

"That's it—a cherry-coloured cat!" he said and went on laughing.

Now it was the workman's turn to be puzzled. It had been a joke in his circle for as long as he could remember, but he never thought it was as funny as this cove apparently did.

In paying his tribute to Cockney wit Major Landfall had no idea that he was in danger of hurting his fellow passenger's feelings, that his persisting amusement was giving an impression that he thought the idea ludicrous rather than mildly humorous.

A cherry-coloured cat: good, that! He could see himself having an intellectual success with it. There were fellows at the club who would be taken in easily. He had a brainwave. He would make them put something into the staff benevolent fund box when they failed to see the point and he had to explain it to them. He could hear them now—old Atkinson-Baines, for instance: "What's that you were saying, Landfall? You've got a cherry-coloured cat? I've kept cats all my life. Absurd idea—never was such an animal!"

Coomber, too: even his quick wit, Major Landfall had no difficulty in believing, would be defeated.

"Oh, I say, Coomber—would you like to see a cherry-coloured cat? I've had one left me by an old lady, a dear old lady. You remember, I went up to the Midlands to see her the other day."

He could imagine Coomber looking at him with that mistrusting eye of his and the slight lip curl he often showed when they were at cross purposes. He would bet Coomber a fiver, yes, and he would take it off him—*and* have the laugh on him all over the office, too!

The train stopped at one of those forlorn stations of London, E. The workman got up and hoisted his gear on to his shoulder, swaying. Major Landfall went across and opened the door for him.

The workman gave him a curious look. "Good morning, mate," he said.

"Good morning — er — mate," said Major Landfall and returned to his place and gathered the little cat lovingly into his arms.

Love's unfair anyway!

by HERBERT HODGE

Why couldn't he learn to leave household accounts to his wife?

IT OFTEN SEEMS TO ME that those married women who go in for politics in a big way (or at least, those who hit the headlines) must be very unhappily married. I can't think of any other reason for some of the queer things they try to do.

For instance, what is a man to make of their attempt to persuade Parliament to pass a law giving the wife what they call "a just proportion" of her husband's earnings, after the family expenses have been paid? This "just proportion" can be settled in each case, they say, by the courts.

Do these good ladies think of themselves as wives or as commercial housekeepers? If we're going to ask the Law to come tramping in where angels fear to tread, we might as well put marriage under the Catering Wages Act and have done with all our romantic notions about love.

The very idea of a wife's being awarded a "just proportion" of her husband's earnings strikes me as being all wrong—quite apart from making a law about it. It's the word "just" that bothers me. I don't believe in justice between man and wife. I don't believe they want justice.

When a man and a woman are loving each other, they don't want anything between them—and certainly not cold justice. Lovers never demand justice from each other. They want, and get, something far more than that. Justice is only the pitiful substitute we have to use when love has failed.

Just Doesn't Apply

Some people, I know, will say there's a big difference between being in love and being married. But as I see it, the only difference between a love affair and a marriage is the difference between a short story and a serial. If you can't put "to be continued" at the end of every chapter it's no longer marriage.

Separated couples may demand justice from each other, but never the married ones. What husband has ever been content with getting justice from his wife? What wife would put up with mere justice from her husband?

*In*justice, yes. There is injustice in nearly every love affair. There is the one who loves and the one who *is* loved—the active lover and the passive one; the lover who mainly gives and the lover who mainly receives. It's an extremely unjust relationship, but that doesn't prevent it from being a very happy one.

Down to Brass Tacks

I'm inclined to believe that the acceptance of love's injustice is the whole secret of marriage. How many happily married people would want to throw away this glorious injustice for the sake of getting "a just proportion" of cold cash?

Coming down from the high romance to the brass tacks, though—I suppose you'd have a hard job to find a married couple who have never quarrelled about money. Married people quarrel at some time or another about nearly everything, so they're almost certain to quarrel about money. All this is simply a normal part of marriage.

Money is a curse—no doubt about that—especially when you haven't got enough of it. But the odd thing is that the more money people have the more they seem to worry about it.

When I got married I was a casual worker, never knowing how much I was going to earn from day to day. Like most casual workers, I simply handed over the few bob I'd brought home, ate the dinner that was put on the table, and asked no questions. So long as the dinner's on the table, where's the sense in a man's worrying his head about how it got there?

Of course, that was the typical casual worker's point of view. The man's problem was earning the money; the woman's problem was living on it. The dinner on the table was the result of their mutual effort.

The obvious thing to do was to sit down and enjoy it while you could—because the awful hazards of tomorrow's dinner didn't bear thinking about. Casual workers have lived like that for generations. Earning is the man's job, spending is the woman's. "Just proportions" simply don't enter into it.

It wasn't until I got moving about among the middle classes, the people with steady incomes and assured pensions, that I found the real money-worriers.

I saw a friend of mine sitting at his table with a pile of papers in front of him and a look of strained misery on his face. "What's up?" I said. "I'm going through the household accounts," said he. Poor chap! I felt sorry for him. Why couldn't he learn to leave it to his wife? Give the woman the money and ask no questions. The old navvy's, coster's and cabman's way. You can't beat it.

Guards Every Penny

But I suppose even that simple plan won't do for all wives. I was talking to a young wife the other day whose husband is in a very good position, and she told me she was hoping he'd give her the money to buy a new glass casserole.

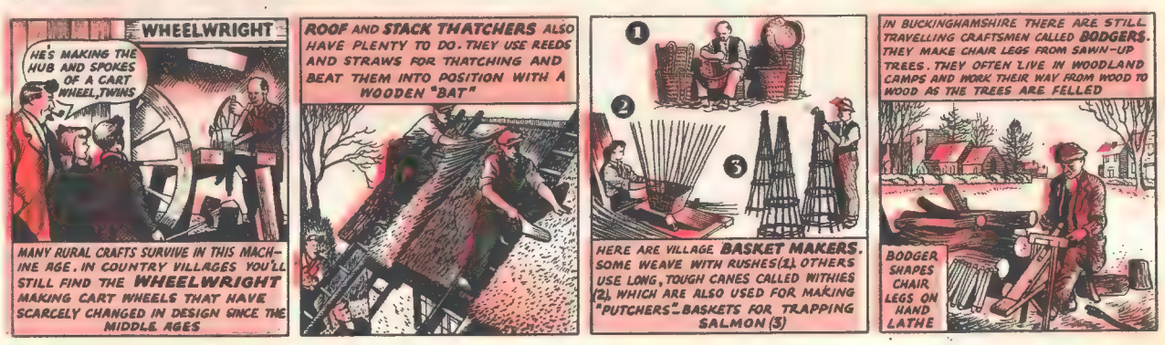
"You don't have to ask him about kitchen things, do you?" I said.

"Oh, yes," she said. "He looks after every penny for me. You see, I'm so extravagant." And she wasn't being sarcastic, either.

She wouldn't have suited me, but then, I wasn't married to her, so it wasn't my business. If her husband was happy taking care of the ha'pence, and she was happy letting him do it, then surely their arrangement was a satisfactory one. What parliament in the world could do better?

UNCLE ANDY

Village Craftsmen


WHEELWRIGHT
HE'S MAKING THE HUB AND SPOKES OF A CART WHEEL, TWINS
MANY RURAL CRAFTS SURVIVE IN THIS MACHINE AGE. IN COUNTRY VILLAGES YOU'LL STILL FIND THE WHEELWRIGHT MAKING CART WHEELS THAT HAVE SCARCELY CHANGED IN DESIGN SINCE THE MIDDLE AGES
ROOF AND STACK THATCHERS ALSO HAVE PLENTY TO DO. THEY USE REEDS AND STRAWS FOR THATCHING AND BEAT THEM INTO POSITION WITH A WOODEN "BAT"
1
2
3
HERE ARE VILLAGE BASKET MAKERS. SOME WEAVE WITH RUSHES (1), OTHERS USE LONG, TOUGH CANES CALLED WITHIES (2), WHICH ARE ALSO USED FOR MAKING "PUTCHERS"—BASKETS FOR TRAPPING SALMON (3)
IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE THERE ARE STILL TRAVELLING CRAFTSMEN CALLED BODGERS. THEY MAKE CHAIR LEGS FROM SAWN-UP TREES. THEY OFTEN LIVE IN WOODLAND CAMPS AND WORK THEIR WAY FROM WOOD TO WOOD AS THE TREES ARE FELLED
BODGER SHAPES CHAIR LEGS ON HAND LATHE

FREE SPEECH

Why are outsiders called in for top police positions? Dentists should give priority to toothache sufferers. Redundant workers: a foreman asks who should go first

THE APPOINTMENT was recently announced of an air marshal as commandant of the new Scottish Police School. The commandant of the present Scottish Police School also applied for the job, but was turned down in favour of this retired airman.

This decision may have been right and just: no one without detailed knowledge can argue about it. But surely something is wrong when a senior appointment in the police force has to be filled by someone who is not a policeman.

There are few opportunities for promotion for the man on the beat, and very few jobs going at the top that command anything like the money paid in other professions. If the authorities wish to attract more men of the right type to the force they are going the wrong way about it.—POLICEMAN, Edinburgh. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Had to go on Hurting

Mrs. L. P. Yeadon

YESTERDAY, my young daughter started to have a bad toothache. Having recently moved to this town I contacted a dentist who had been recommended to me.

The child was in great pain, but "Sorry, can't attend to her for a week or ten days," was the reply. I have now spent nearly two whole days searching for a dentist who could do something for her, but in every case the answer was the same. She is not old enough to go to a school clinic, and in any case would probably have to await treatment there, too.

Just what is a distracted mother to do in a case like this?—MRS. L. P. YEADON, Sheffield. (Full address enclosed.)

Getting the Sack

DESPITE THE NEED for exports, many factories are now faced with redundant workers. As the position will probably become more acute, how should a fair-minded foreman select those who have to go?

Should he pick married women? Dismiss those with least length of service with the firm? Or work on an individual basis and go by each person's personal working record?—M. D., London, E.4. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Down in the Forest

WHILE AGREEING that something should be done to improve conditions for people living in the New Forest compounds, I do not think the proposals Harry Hopkins mentions in his article (JOHN BULL, January 29) are very progressive.

Many crimes are committed in the name of progress. Now, I suppose the unspoiled forest will have rows of houses and rows of little officials. Three thousand acres will go under the plough. Probably there will be holiday camps with swimming pools and playing fields—and maybe fun fairs.

If this sort of thing continues, our once fair island will become a cross between a holiday camp and the Black Country.—E. D. BRAGG, 20 Homefield Avenue, Bedford.

Room for All

THE CONDITIONS in which poor and homeless people have to exist in the New Forest are appalling. Now we can hope that this state of affairs will not be allowed to go on. May the people win its fight against the so-called "gentry" who think the country was made only for them.—MRS. MARJORIE GROOM, 51 Havant Road, Cosham, Hants.

Suggestion

SCOTTISH MINERS WANT to give £2,500 as a gift to French miners. May a Scot in exile suggest they might find greater need for it in the tenements of Glasgow?—W. CRAVEN, 253 College Street, London, N.W.1.

Fogbound London Airport

I WONDER IF THE PEOPLE who planned London Airport now realize their folly. Every day we hear of aircraft diverted to Hurn and other places because of fog.

As London Airport is surrounded by reservoirs and gravel pits, and within easy reach of the River Thames, it is natural that fog should hang around longer.—W. STANFORD, 275 Uxbridge Road, Feltham, Middlesex.

Wide Open Spaces

Mrs. W. J. Solomon

IN ALL MY sixty-seven years, I have never seen so many toothless, gummy, bespectacled folk as at the present time in Cornwall. There must have been a remarkably heavy run on the new health scheme, although so far I have seen few hearing aids.—MRS. W. J. SOLOMON, Trevallas, St. Agnes, Cornwall.

Eire's Real Worries

THE AVERAGE MAN in Eire doesn't care two hoots whether the partition of Ireland comes to an end or not. He is vitally concerned, however, at Eire's unemployment figure of 81,000.

Politicians are escaping from this major problem by beating the big drum about the border question. Manufacturers in Eire are equally insincere when they cry for the end of partition: they have a genuine fear for the efficiency of Northern Ireland's industry which they can never hope to equal.—"WINSLOW," Rathmines, Dublin, Eire. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Right or Wrong?

OUR DAUGHTER is three and a half years old, and many people to whom we have spoken lately seem to think that, because we allow her to come into the bathroom with us, we are disgusting and not fit to rear children.

She has always done so, and, of course, does not take the slightest notice whether she sees us dressed or undressed. We thought this the best way to bring her up, but in view of other people's opinions, we are now frankly puzzled and uncertain about it.—MRS. JOYCE I'ANSON, 63 Fishers Lane, Cambridge.

Mrs. Joyce I'Anson with her daughter: she poses a problem for parents

Her Ambition

TODAY, MARKING COMPOSITIONS on the subject, "A Person I Would Like to Be," I noted that most of my pupils were, naturally enough, drawn to film stars and other glamorous personalities.

But one girl wrote: "I would like to be the little girl next door because she has a baby sister, and I have no brothers or sisters, so I cannot play with anyone when I am at home." Simple words, pleading the case of that tragic figure—the only child.—TEACHER, Blackburn. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Watchmen's Union

IT IS TIME a trade union was formed for watchmen and gatekeepers. All factories and works do not employ uniformed commissionaires, and in the industrial north wages and conditions vary at almost every works for these jobs. Hours vary from eight- to fifteen-hour shifts, and the money is anything an employer likes to give.—W. ATKINSON, 40 Westbury Street, Sunderland.

Quiet, Retiring Tamers

AS SECRETARY OF THE British Circus Ring, I should like to reply to your correspondent, Miss Gertrude Nielsen, who alleged (JOHN BULL, January 22) that cruelty must be inflicted in the taming of wild beasts.

I know practically all of our present-day animal trainers; and they are mainly quiet, retiring men, who have too much respect for their own skins to antagonize their charges. Their main qualifications are will-power and infinite patience. The trainer who has these need not think of handing out any form of punishment: his "cats" will always bend to his stronger will. — EDWARD C. COOPER, British Circus Ring, 54 Burns Street, Nottingham.

Agent Hasn't a House

RUPERT HAMMOND, the hero of *Green Grow the Rushes*, the JOHN BULL serial by Howard Clewes, must have worked for a "mushroom" firm of estate agents if he gained the impression that the profession was one of "black-coated, bowler-hatted, briefcased spivvery."

As an estate agent who, unlike many of these temporary firms, will still be in business after the present boom is over, I deplore inflationary prices as much as anyone else. As an ex-Serviceman, I have not been able to afford to buy my own home yet.—J. D. GARDNER, 56 Mosley Street, Manchester, 2.

Crime and Punishment

Which one?

I DISAGREE with your findings as to the culprit in Douglas L. Mays's delightful cover painting of the window - breaking snowballers. (JOHN BULL, January 29).

The girl would automatically have dropped the evidence had she really been guilty. I am inclined to pick the youngster on the right. He is psychologically prompted to protect that part of his anatomy which will shortly receive punishment. Anyway, few covers have given greater pleasure.—H. S. DAVISON, 2a Essenden Road, St. Leonards, Kent.

Because of space shortage only a limited selection of the many readers' letters submitted can be printed. If your views are squeezed out, it does not mean that they have been overlooked by the Editor. For every letter used, John Bull pays one guinea. Letters should be marked "Free Speech" and carry the full name and address of sender for publication.

ON THE ADVENT OF A FIRST GRANDCHILD

". . . your Mother and I are delighted that Mary wants to call him Nicholas; tell her I take it as a great compliment to my adequacy as a father-in-law! We very much wish he could be christened here where you were married by our old vicar, but the journey would be long and tiring for them both."

TO your family and friends, write simply, from the heart. Your letters reflect a background they remember—the quietness of home, the evenings spent by the fire, when you peacefully discussed the day's happenings. And as carefully as you select your words, so you select your notepaper. There is no better choice than Basildon Bond. It makes writing, *and reading*, a pleasure; its quality has remained extremely high, its price remarkably low. Ask for Basildon Bond by name.

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48" x 24"	£1 . 14 . 3
36" x 18"	£1 . 0 . 6
30" x 12"	12 .11
27" x 11"	9 .10

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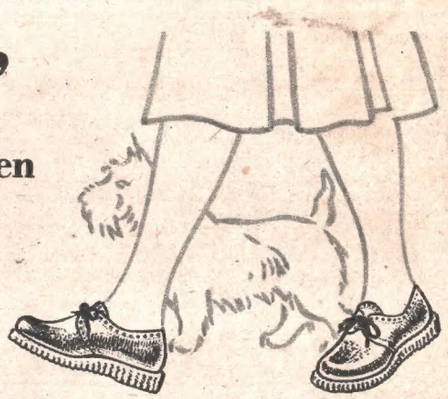

'Oral'- *Makers of good shoes* - Rushden, Northants.

COLD *FACTS ABOUT*

PRESTCOLD Refrigerators

WHERE ARE THEY?

They're in Bulawayo — and Brussels. Bombay, Bogota and Ballarat. They're all over the world—fine British refrigerators doing a fine export job.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

Yes, *you* want one too. Who would blame you? They *are* Britain's finest refrigerators and we wish there were more *for* Britain. But numbers *are* increasing . . . *Your* turn *will* come soon!

WHO MAKES THEM?

Prestcold Refrigerators are made by Britain's largest manufacturers of automatic refrigeration in the most modern refrigerator factory in the world. Prestcold means *everything* in refrigeration: you can buy no finer.

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4 DARKALINE The Stain with mirror-like Gloss. Dries quickly.

5 LIQUID LINO Painted on shabby lino makes it colourful and wear like new.

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PRIZES value over £1,500 in "Bullets" and Xwords THIS WEEK!

FOR *Bullets* this week we offer an array of 3,045 prizes, to a total value of over £750.

One special attraction is that each of the three chief cash prize-winners will also receive an additional award of a Regentone "99" table radiogram or Hoover washing machine, according to choice. Another feature is the £2 food hampers for those who just miss the big cheques.

Twenty years old this month, our famous common-sense Crossword celebrates with a record postwar offer of £750 in solid cash. You can enter your *Bullets* and Crosswords in the same envelope, but it *must* be posted by Monday, February 28.

"BULLETS" 1st PRIZE

£500

plus RADIOGRAM or WASHING MACHINE

2nd Prize **£50** | 3rd Prize **£25**

each plus Radiogram or Washing Machine

2 of £10, 5 of £5, 10 of £2.10s.

25 FAMILY HAMPERS containing FOWL, FRUIT, etc., value £2

3,000 New Prizes

BONUSES of "BULLETS" SEASONS

Each cash or hamper prize for *Bullet* which was one of 28, entry of 4 efforts on single coupon (or plain-paper entry sheet) will be accompanied by £1 *Bullets* Season as Bonus.

"Bullets" Winners No. 1,664

FIRST PRIZE: £500: B. Schofield, 71 Irwin Road, St. Helens, Lancs:

BOUQUET FOR TEACHER
FIFTY *Attentive, Happy* FACES

SECOND PRIZE, £50: R. E. Bishop, Pumping Station, Taunton: GETS OUR VOTE —SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES BALLOT-BOX.

THIRD PRIZE, £25: Mrs. A. H. Wood, 43 Tamworth Road, Croydon, Surrey: REMAINING ON THE TOP—DIFFICULT—THE WORLD "TURNS."

OTHER AWARDS: £20: W. J. Millar, 26 Larne Street, Ballymena, N. Ireland: WHAT BRIGHT HOPES —RUSSIA SHATTERED, "SHUTTERING" RUSSIA! £18: E. Bedford, 94 Southsea Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea: THIN ON THE TOP—DAD—THINKS IT'S THINKING! £16: Miss G. K. Mearns, 9 Sterndale Road, W. Kensington, W.14: GETS OUR GOAT—ALWAYS *Heading* AUSTERITY'S "MARCH." £14: J. R. N. Moss, 3 Kerry Crescent, Calne, Wilts: LOOKED A BIT PALE—BLUSHING BRIDE, BESIDE GILES! £12: A. Morgan, 107 Paxford Road, N. Wembley: WHAT SPURS HOPES—ARE, WHEN TROUBLES "DIG"! £10: J. M. Agnew, 39 High Street, Lurgan, Co. Armagh: GETS OUR GOAT'S—GOAT, GRANDPA'S GOATEE! £10: H. Davies, 3 Cecil Terrace, Caerleon, Mon: A WOMAN'S WORK—SHOPPING? GIVE ME WORKSHOP!

Ten prizes of £2 10s., 50 of £1 and 3,000 "Good Shots" have also been posted.

(Above result is reprinted for sake of readers who missed last week's JOHN BULL; *result of "Bullets" No. 1,665 is due in next week's issue.)*

★ **GIANT £750 and THREE WISHES OFFER NEXT WEEK!**

ADD 2, 3 or 4 WORDS to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* on right. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make *Bullet* as usual.

What We Need Today	Football Star
On The Industrial Front	Money In His Pocket
	Muddling Through
Providence	If Dad Emigrated
Just A Mockery	Took A Back Seat
Please, Sir Stafford	With Fiendish Glee
Ray Of Hope	In The Black Maria
Day After Day	**Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions**
They're Newlyweds, So	A Free.....
	Passed The.....
A Policeman	One Of Nature's.....
Not Finished Yet	Luckily For.....
Behind The Veil	Morsel Of.....
Cold And Calculating	Won't It Be...When
Full Of Holes	

GET THIS GUIDE

To get the help of *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, including extra winners for your guidance, advice from competitors and an invaluable "Weighing-up" of Clues for Crossworders, enclose label below with your *Bullets* or Crossword entry this week.

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope, covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "COMBINED," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY "Bullets," 1,669 (or Xword 621) "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

BULLETIN LABEL 482

STICK 2½d. STAMP here to secure *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated March 12. If this is your first specimen copy please mark × here

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

EXAMPLE ..... 6d.

BULLET

EX. ..... 6d.

B.

EX. ..... 6d.

B.

EX. ..... 6d.

B.

Fee: 6d. per *Bullet* on coupon or plain paper—see Bonus Offer above.

Closing Postmark, **1,669** MON., FEB. 28

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O. value .....

No. .....

Signed .....

Address .....

"I'M a very ordinary person," says modest Mrs. K. E. Naldrett, 229 Tudor Road, Leicester. "Just a housewife, with a husband and a little boy to care for and, like most people these days, we haven't a great deal of money."

Like many hundreds of others, this thirty-three year old reader has made a profitable hobby of JOHN BULL'S Crosswords. With her first entry, last November, she won a Runner-up award including a Christmas cake and plum pudding. A week or two later she won £50 and a 100-piece crockery set. In the very next Crossword, she beat all her rivals, capturing the £100 cash outright!

"My only help comes from my dictionary and from the *Crossword Gazette*," she told us. "That is, except for occasionally asking my husband for advice which I seldom follow, anyway! I'm sure that, with careful thought and perseverance, anyone can win."

You could not start on this hobby at a better moment than today, for our £750 Crossword birthday offer brings you a far bigger prize-list than usual.

RULES 1. First Prize to best *Bullet* received, others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated March 19 and in JOHN BULL dated March 26, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding.

£750 CASH for XWORDS

FIRST PRIZE **£500**

£150 CASH AMONGST 1st RUNNERS-UP

£100 CASH AMONGST 2nd RUNNERS-UP

All above prizes will be posted Wed. March 16. Result of Xword No. 617 is due to appear in next week's "John Bull."

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter one extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 621**

1. Sportsman derives satisfaction from landing one
3. Snapping of one occasionally creates annoyance
7. Kiddies visiting zoo do this to see elephants and giraffes
8. Such a trap won't give full satisfaction if it needs oiling
9. Student is likely to feel indebted when introduced to a fine one
13. Continuous working will exhaust any
14. Delivery is important to one who takes this
15. It's not unknown for spy to have extracted entirely false information from

Down Clues

2. There's a natural tendency for new these to become rather slack as time goes on
4. Is apt to leave you feeling lethargic for a time
5. Nobody cares much when bad penny is given in
6. Boxers now and again this their opponents
10. A tremendous lot of polish is bought in
11. If ever war should return, the old country would want every man this to help her
12. Is sometimes pinned up

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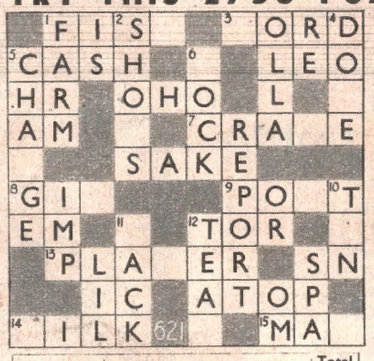

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated March 12.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

621 Closing Postmark MON., FEB. 28

I enclose P.O. value ....

No. .....

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

Write to John Bull About It

John Bull's expert advisers help to solve readers' personal problems. Answers on points of general interest are published each week

Backward Child

M. P. (*Spalding*): You really ought not to feel hurt or annoyed because the education authorities want to send your boy to a special school. There is no disgrace about it. Children who suffer from slight handicaps, physical or mental, need the help of teachers who have been specially trained for the work, and in a special school they get more individual attention. If backward children are sent to an ordinary school they develop a sense of inferiority which haunts them all their lives. With a little extra attention in a special school they frequently "catch up" what they have lost through ill-health or some other early handicap.

Sickness Benefit

F. H. (*Ilkley*): Under the new regulations now in operation, sickness benefit under the National Insurance Act is not reduced where the insured person is receiving a disability pension or allowance. But sickness benefit is not admissible where an unemployability supplement is being paid. Dependants' benefits are reduced by the amount included for them in the disability pension or allowance.

Naval Scholarships

A. N. (*Bristol*): Scholarships for boys wishing to become deck officers in the Merchant Navy will again be awarded this year to the sons of Merchant Navy, R.N., R.N.R., and R.N.V.R. officers and ratings who are still serving or who died, were seriously disabled by enemy action or discharged on grounds of ill-health while on war service. The scholarships are awarded at the Nautical College, Pangbourne, H.M.S. *Conway*, H.M.S. *Worcester*, T.S. *Mercury*, and the School of Navigation, University College, Southampton. Applications should be made to the principals of the schools not later than April 30, 1949. Candidates for the Nautical College, Pangbourne, and the T.S. *Mercury* must be thirteen or fourteen years of age; those for H.M.S. *Conway* and H.M.S. *Worcester* fourteen or fifteen years of age; and candidates for the University College, Southampton, sixteen years of age..

Postwar Credits

E. H. (*Bromley*): Postwar credits can be left to a dependant by will. If this is not done they pass to the next of kin. They have to be held until the beneficiary reaches the age of sixty-five (for a man) or sixty (for a woman).

Valuing a Business

V. H. (*Bristol*): When a business is sold, the usual method of arriving at its value is to estimate its worth at a given number of years' purchase of annual profits—usually three to five years.

Lost Tobacco Tokens

E. S. (*Stockport*): It is not possible to replace tobacco tokens which are lost, stolen or accidentally destroyed. This ruling was given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury last June.

Our team of experts will solve your queries (except medical) if you send them to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 186 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Domestic problems to "Humanist," at same address. Stamped envelope for reply, please.

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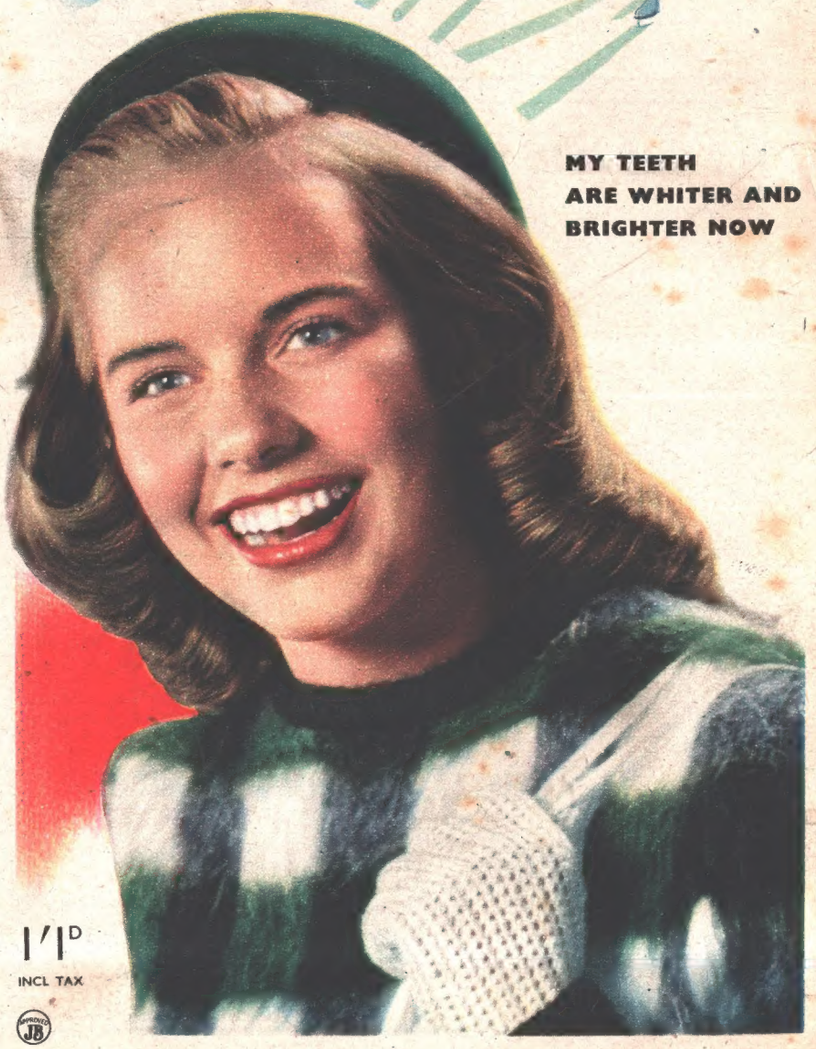

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